

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE

*A Complete Guide to the Conventions of the Game
For the Beginner and the Advanced Player
With Full Instructions for
Declaring and Playing*

NULLOS

BY
EDMUND ROBERTSON,
Author of "Bridge Developments," etc., etc.

Including the Laws of Royal Auction Bridge
as Adopted by the Portland Club,
May, 1914.

THE FIELD & QUEEN (HORACE COX) LTD.
WINDSOR HOUSE, BREAM'S BUILDINGS,
LONDON, E.C.

PRINTED BY
THE FIELD & QUEEN (HORACE COX) LTD.,
WINDSOR HOUSE, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, LONDON, E.C.

PREFACE.

"NULLOS" are no-trumpers with a minus value, they have not been *officially* recognised, but an increasing number of players are taking up the new bid, which adds so much variety and piquancy to the declarations and to the play of the hands. It is a development that gives Royal Auction that poise of which it appeared to stand in need, and in a sense completes the game by allowing even a poor hand a chance to take part in the bidding.

Our card legislators doubtless felt that it was too early to take any notice of Nullos. It took them two years to recognise Royal Spades, which had been played at many of the London clubs since June, 1912; at the same rate of progression we shall have them legislating for Nullos possibly in 1916.

The Nullo bid is only an additional declaration, let this be distinctly understood. It does not make any radical change necessary in the conventions of declaring, as Royal Spades did. It is possible to go from a table at which the new bid is played to another table at which it is not played without mental disturbance. No fresh problems are presented to the mind—the game remains unchanged. This is a crowning merit, because none of the

inconvenience that is usually experienced in the period of transition from the old era to the new will be felt when Nullos are universally adopted.

* * * * *

I have to acknowledge the great help my brother, Mr. J. A. Robertson, has given me in writing this book, and especially in collecting test-hands from actual play. The credit of having invented the "minus-four rule," which is so useful to the partners in playing against a Nullo contract, is due to him.

E. R.

August 16th, 1914.

CONTENTS.

	I.	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY		I

FIRST PRINCIPLES AND SOME SCHOOLS OF BIDDING...	13
---	----

The Leading Schools—"Piling up Velvet"—Lying Low for Penalties—Playing for the Rubber Bonus—Average Size of a Rubber—Reasons for Waiting—Flaws of the Waiting Game—A Forward Game—Value of First Principles—A Cardinal Principle—Another Basic Principle—The Six Declarations—Game the First Goal—Advantages of the Deal—Advantage of Playing the Two Hands—An Important Consideration—Relative Importance of the Major and Minor Suits—Reward for Sound Declarations—Straightforward Bidding—Effect of Nullos on the Bidding.

III.

THE OPENING BID: "ONE NO-TRUMP"	28
--	----

No-Trump the Best Opening Declaration—A Minimum No-Trumper—Estimating the Value of a Hand—Discounting Singleton Aces and Unguarded Honours—Requirements of a No-Trump Hand—More Minimum No-Trumpers—Average Hand No-Trumper—"One No-Trump" Better than a Pass—Holdings above the Average—Three-Ace No-Trumpers—Aceless No-Trumpers—Standard No-Trumpers—Two Suit No-Trumpers—Aggressive and Informatory No-Trumpers—No-Trumps and Nullos.

	PAGE
IV.	
THE OPENING BID : ROYALS AND HEARTS	48
<p>The Major Suit Contracts—Royals and Hearts in Preference to No-Trump—The Extra Trick—"Not No-Trump"—Distinction between the Major and Minor Suits—The Extra Trick required for Game—Light Suit Bids a Mistake—Royals or Hearts?—Minimum Strength for a Bid—Table of Royal and Heart Declarations.</p>	
V.	
THE OPENING BID : DIAMONDS AND CLUBS	57
<p>Requirements of a Bid in a Minor Suit—Five by Cards required for Game—Informatory Bids of Diamonds and Clubs—"Partial Game"—Distinction between a Major and a Minor Suit—Danger of Declaring a Minor Suit without Trump Length—Inferences to be Drawn from the Bid—No-Trump in Preference to Diamonds and Clubs.</p>	
VI.	
OPENING BIDS OF "TWO," "THREE," AND "FOUR" ...	65
<p>No Inflexible Rule for Declaring—"Freak Hands"—When to Discourage Adverse Bidding—Three Conditions Necessary—"Two No-Trumps"—Suit Bids of "Two"—"Two Royals" and "Two Hearts"—Feeble Shut-out Bids—"Two Diamonds" and "Two Clubs"—Suit Bids of "Three"—"Three Royals" and "Three Hearts"—"Three Diamonds" and "Three Clubs"—Suit Bids of "Four."</p>	
VII.	
PASSING THE DECLARATION	76
<p>The Art of Passing—"Not No-Trump"—"Not Suit Bids"—"Not Nullos"—Passing with Good Hands—Some Waiting Hands Discussed.</p>	

CONTENTS.

ix

VIII.

PAGE

DECLARATIONS BY THE SECOND PLAYER ... 82

Passing the Dealer's Pass—No-Trump when the Dealer has Passed—Suit Bids when the Dealer has Passed—Voluntary Bids and Forced Bids—Two Golden Rules for the Second Player—Doubtful Overbids—When the Dealer has Called "One No-Trump"—Suit Bids Over the Dealer's No-Trump—Over-calling Dealer's No-Trump in a Major Suit—Light Over-calls in a Suit—Over-calling Dealer's No-Trump in a Minor Suit—Over-calling Dealer's No-Trump with Nullos—Over-calling Dealer's Suit Bids.

IX.

DECLARATIONS BY THE THIRD PLAYER ... 95

When the Dealer has Passed—Secondary Pre-emptive Bids—Over-calling the Partner's Bid—Over-calling the Dealer's Attacking Bid—Aggressive Over-calls—Two Royals or Hearts over Dealer's No-Trump—No-Trump over Dealer's One Royal or Heart—Protective Over-calls—The Dealer's Answer to an Over-bid—Supporting the Dealer's Declaration—Raising the Partner's No-Trump Declaration—Raising the Dealer's Suit Bid—Estimating "Tricks" and "Raisers"—Estimating the Assisting Value of a Hand.

X.

CONTINUATION OF THE BIDDING ... 110

The Personal Element—Declarations by the Fourth Player—Importance of the Major Suit Contracts—Over-calling Partner's Suit Bid—How to Secure a Majority of Trumps—Giving Partner the Benefit of the Doubt—Estimating the Declaring Value of a Hand—Declaring Value of the Trump Suit—Trick Value of Plain Suits—Appraising the Assisting Value of a Hand—Difference between Declaring

<i>X—continued.</i>	PAGE
and Assisting Values—Raising Suit Declarations— Combining the Hands in a Suit Declaration— Raising a No-Trump Declaration—Double Bidding— Speculative Bidding—Bidding to the Limit— Flag Flying.	

XI.

DOUBLING	132
The Golden Rule for Doubling—When to Double —Doubling Instead of Bidding—The Personal Element—Bad Doubles—Rescuing Partner from a Double.	

XII.

THE SCORE	138
Order of Bidding—Effect of the Score on the Bidding—The Game Line.	

XIII.

THE ADVERSARIES' PLAY	144
Against a Trump Declaration—The Opening Lead from a Sequence or Long Suit—Singletons, Doubletons, and Strengtheners—Undesirable Open- ing Leads—Table of Opening Leads Against a Trump Declaration—Summary of Leads with a Declared Trump—Returning a Partner's Lead— Inferring the Strength and Length of the Trump Suit—The Seven Rule—Minimum Strength for a Suit Declaration—Practical Application of the Trump Formula—The Opening Lead at No- Trumps—Selecting Partner's Suit—The Card to Lead—Opening Leader's Own Suit—Table of Leads at No-Trumps—Leading a High Card at No-Trumps—Simplifying the Leads—Returning Partner's Lead at No-Trumps—Unblocking—The Discard—The Club Convention—Conventions and Inferences.	

CONTENTS.

xi

XIV.

PAGE

THE DECLARER'S PLAY	169
----------------------------	-----

With a Declared Trump—Playing without Trumps
—Throwing the Lead, Finessing, and Underplay—
Locating Adverse Strength—How to use the
Counting System.

XV.

CONCERNING NULLOS	176
--------------------------	-----

Various Trick Values Assigned to Nullos—Table
of Trick and Honour Values including Nullos—
A Contract to Lose Tricks—How Honours are
Scored—Sizing Up the Contract—Only an Addi-
tional Declaration.

XVI.

THE OPENING BID: NULLOS	183
--------------------------------	-----

Three Suits Guarded—Protected Suits—A Yar-
borough not Always a Good Nullo—Bad Hands
for Nullos—Composite Hands—"Nullos" Not
No-Trump—"Nullos" Not Royals or Hearts—
"Nullos" Not Diamonds or Clubs—A Non-
Informatory Declaration—"Nullos" in Preference
to a Pass—Blank Suits and Singletons—A
Speculative Bid—The Exposed Hand—Low Cards
versus High Cards—A Formula for the Nullo Bid.

XVII.

HOW TO PLAY NULLOS	198
---------------------------	-----

The Blind Lead at Nullos—The Minus-Four Rule
—Leading Ideas in the Play of a Nullo—Test Hand
No. 1—Comments on the Bidding—The Play of
the Hand—The Return Lead—Throwing the Lead
—Counting the Cards in each Suit—Value of Exit
Cards—Taking an Inevitable Trick—End-Play
at Nullos—Test Hand No. 2—Value of Nullos as
Forcers—Making a Target of Dummy—Test Hand
No. 3—Test Hand No. 4—Combining the Hands
in the Bidding.

	PAGE
XVIII.	
THE LAWS OF ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE ...	215
The Rubber—Scoring—Cutting—Formation of Table—Cutting Out—Entry and Re-entry— Shuffling—The Deal—A New Deal—Declaring Trumps—Doubling and Re-doubling—Dummy— Exposed Cards—Cards Liable to be Called—Cards Played in Error—The Revoke—Calling for New Cards—General Rules.	
XIX.	
THREE-HANDED ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE ...	238
XX.	
ETIQUETTE OF ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE ...	241
XXI.	
ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS	243

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.



INTRODUCTORY.

It is now twenty years since Lord Brougham, in the autumn of 1894, expounded the mysteries of Bridge to the Members of the Portland Club. When on that historic occasion he pronounced Bridge "*by far the best card game ever invented,*" he little dreamt of the immense popularity the game would soon achieve, and how suddenly it was destined to lose that popularity.

Royal Auction, as now played, is a better game all round than Bridge, but like all innovations it has encountered the usual storm of protest and disapproval. From Long Whist to "Nullos" is a far cry. Short Whist, Bridge, Auction Bridge, and Royal Auction have each in turn encountered the same futile opposition, and it is now the turn of "Nullos" to face the music.

The truth is, Bridge was a more amusing and an easier game to play than Whist, which it had no difficulty in ousting from all the leading card rooms, and Auction has ousted Bridge for much the same reasons.

At each stage a new feature has been added to the older game, and, while a change is not necessarily an improvement, these successive changes have, in the main, been undoubted and sterling

improvements. The popular voice has acclaimed each innovation, and although Manu many centuries ago declared that wisdom is not to be attained by the mere counting of heads, in a case of this kind universal popularity is an infallible test.

At Whist the trump was decided arbitrarily by the turn up card. Bridge imported a new method of deciding the trump, with varying values assigned to tricks and honours in the different suits; and it is said the French added their known partiality for playing with a dummy.* The pleasing variation of no-trumps was also introduced.

Bridge was indeed a great game, but there was one great flaw, the dealing side had an immense advantage. They had the whole say about the declaration, and could make the game expensive if their cards were good, or cheap if they were bad, besides having the advantage of seeing the two hands, and of so knowing how best to combine their forces against the adversaries.

Bridge introduced the right of choosing the trump instead of being tied down to the turn up card, Auction Bridge extended the right of naming the trump from the dealing side to all the players. But it was the spade call that really sounded the death knell of Bridge. To hold four aces, or five honours in hearts, when the other side had the deal and declared spades, was a sore trial to the non-dealers. It was more than flesh and blood could stand; and a game that gave all the players a

* It has never been definitely ascertained how this interesting feature, the dummy hand, came to be included in the game.

voice in the declaration, and in which a good hand had always a decided value, came as a great relief.

As in Auction all the four players have a voice in the declaration, theoretically the best hand has the best of the game; the opponents of the dealing side are no longer left out in the cold to mourn over their ill-luck in not having a chance to declare their good cards.

The trick values assigned to the suits and to no-trumps in Auction Bridge were at first borrowed without any discrimination from Bridge. It led to a preponderance of no-trumpers, and it was soon seen that it was necessary to adjust the inequalities arising from the low values assigned to the black suits and the inflated value assigned to no-trumps.

Suggestions of improvement and revision of the methods of scoring were made on all sides, and finally led to the adoption of the Royal count, which is said to have been first played at the Racquet Club in Philadelphia in 1911.

The count as it now stands is the aggregate production of many minds. It has been built up gradually; but, as to how and when the successive changes were introduced, there is very little that is authentic. The only thing certain is that the ingenuity of card-players has, so far, invented six declarations with only four suits; the two special calls being no-trumps and nullos. The inquirer has tried in vain to discover who invented no-trumps, or even to find out when it was invented, now will he be more successful in discovering who invented royals and nullos?

The three "improvements" of which we hear so much appear to have been suggested more than a decade ago. The enhanced value of spades, the *misère* call,* and the 10 point no-trumper, all hail from the good old days of Bridge. Nor is Auction Bridge such a new game as it is generally supposed to be—it was played in India in 1902. Mr. Oswald Crawford, who had recently returned from India, writing to the *Times* of the 16th January, 1903, on *Misery Bridge and Auction Bridge*, says, "Auction Bridge, which I have seen much played and much liked this winter, is more lively than dummy bridge."

The game failed to attract any considerable attention till "John Doe" published a series of papers in the *Pioneer*, which he followed up by a little brochure on the game in 1904.† On the strength of this booklet, which led the way in Auction literature, the credit of having invented the game has been ascribed to "John Doe." But like all games, Auction Bridge was not the unaided inspiration of a single genius, for "John Doe" points out that he got the idea of the game he did invent from "a chance reference to the possibilities of such a game in a magazine article."

It was some time before Auction Bridge obtained a footing at the London Clubs: it first appeared at

* See the *Laws of Misery Bridge*, by Oswald Crawford, 1902. The credit of reviving the *misère* call in its present form is due to Mr. Fred. C. Thwaits, of Milwaukee, at the time (1912) President of the American Whist League.

† *Auction Bridge*, by John Doe. (Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1904.)

the Bath Club in 1905, then at the Portland Club in 1908, and from there it spread rapidly to the other clubs.

The royal and *misère* declarations were obviously superfluous at Bridge, but they are pre-eminently suited to Auction. The original value assigned to royal spades was 10 a trick, but some unknown Bostonian suggested that its value be made 9. A reversion was also suggested to the old no-trump value 10,* and Mr. Milton C. Work, the Chairman of the Whist Club of New York, assigned the values of 7 to diamonds and 6 to clubs. Thus the broken and unsuitable progression of 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12 was changed for the simple and eminently suitable sequence of 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10; the value of 2 being retained for a defensive spade. In a bidding game low values are necessarily out of count, whereas the arrangement of the trick values in sequence tends to adjust bidding values, and so to increase competition in the bidding. The revised count immediately became popular, and has been played at some of the London Clubs since June, 1912.

When the laws of the game were recently under revision by the Portland Club, they decided to make a further radical change. In the royal count the value of 2 was assigned to ordinary spades,

* In a small pamphlet on *Biritch, or Russian Whist*, printed in London in 1886, the value of 10 points a trick is assigned to *Biritch*, or no trumps. The same value was assigned to no trumps in *Pons Asinorum; or, Bridge for Beginners*, by A. G. Hulme Beaman, 1889.

and the enhanced value of 9 to royal spades. The double value given to the spade suit was an anomaly, and the retention of the low value of 2 for common or garden spades soon led to the invention of a system of informatory spade bids, ranging from "two spades" to "seven spades," to indicate certain holdings in the caller's hand.

The "two spade" call had grown up under the old count, and had acquired a special orthodoxy of its own; but to declare "three," "four," "five," "six," and "seven spades" was felt to be carrying these conventional calls to preposterous lengths. Not only were there original bids of high spades, but a complicated system of "secondary spade" bids was gradually introduced, and there was much talk of more to follow.

When high spades first became popular in America nearly two years ago, a vigorous campaign was conducted against them by Miss Florence Irwin in the *New York Times*, but they found ardent champions in many expert players, notably in Mr. Milton C. Work, Chairman of the Whist Club of New York; and in spite of obvious objections they gained in popularity, and were regarded as an important item in the repertoire of the declarer.

Royal Auction was thus being converted from a game into a study. Originality, dash, and brilliancy were being gradually eliminated, and there were an increasing number of set conventions that a player was obliged to learn by rote or give up the game. There was no real difficulty in mastering the

multiple spade calls—the trouble was, they entailed school-work, and were rough on the mere pleasure-seeker, out for an evening's enjoyment. They might be extremely profitable to the professional expert, but they were a wicked plot against the enjoyment of honest card-players bent on amusement.

Apart from the mental discomfort and "the jar on one's sporting instincts," high spades could never be regarded as legitimate card conversation. The caller made a declaration and assumed a contract which he had no hope and no intention of fulfilling. When he said "six spades," he did not disclose either length or strength in spades—he had not the remotest prospect of fulfilling his contract—he had merely used the call as a device to indicate that he had good *hearts*, and all round strength, *except in the suit in which he declared to make a small slam*, and he expected his partner to take him out by either calling "two hearts" or "two no-trumps," whichever suited his hand best.

The adoption of these spurious calls could not fail to produce a system of purely artificial conventions repugnant to Auction players as a whole. The result was a foregone conclusion. The Portland Club decided to abolish the spade call at 2 a trick, and with it has disappeared the whole fabric of artificial bidding.

The introduction of nullos, which is another innovation that hails from America, has added variety and charm to the game. It is said, that the new call, like Futurism in art and Schönberg in

music, has set all the experts wondering where they are and what to think of it, but this is mere hyperbole, as it has not in any way interfered with the new count—it is only an additional declaration—and it has also the merit of not interfering with the established conventions of the game.

Nullos have made a rapid and continued advance in popular estimation; and in the opinion of those capable of forming a judgment have come to stay. They have increased the range and fertility of the declarant's resources, and raised the faculty of card intuition to the n^{th} power. It is not so difficult to play a nullo as it looks, it merely wants experience, and already there are players who manipulate a nullo-hand with a card instinct that often looks like inspiration.

When the bidding at Auction is dull the game is dull, when the bidding is lively the game is lively. The keener the competition to secure the contract the greater the interest of the game. Both royals and nullos have quickened up the game by increasing its bidding possibilities. They force the declarer into high contracts and extend the chances for penalising rash and unsound bidding.

Royal Auction possesses a fascination for even the inexperienced player. Apart from its other charms, it is an easier game to play than Whist or Bridge, and a level-headed man, of balanced judgment, would of his own intuition be a better bidder, and all round a more desirable partner at Royal Auction, than the average Whist or Bridge player with a big store of book knowledge.

The play is vital when an extra trick is needed to make the game or to fulfil the contract, especially if it is a high contract that has been doubled, but a large majority of hands at Royal Auction play themselves. The finest card memory, the greatest skill in discarding, signalling, echoing, and playing are of less account than the all-important faculty of assessing the correct declaring value of a hand, of estimating its game-making chances, or the chances of defeating an adverse contract. The substantial reward for level-headed judgment in declaring and doubling makes for independence of conventions, and is one of the chief reasons for the increasing popularity of the game, tending as it does to place the beginner on the same footing as the experienced player.

The bidding and the dummy hand simplify the play, but it is difficult to see why Royal Auction should be regarded as a less intellectual game than Whist or Bridge, since there is more to remember, more inferences to be drawn, and a greater variety of considerations to be weighed. There are not merely the game and the rubber to be played for, but there is also a constant weighing of the balance of probabilities in favour of defeating an adverse contract. The necessity for drawing rapid and correct inferences from the bidding and the delicate assessing of probabilities, develop powers of concentration, observation, judgment, and memory, and raise the game to a high intellectual plane.

Royal Auction undoubtedly hits the temper of the times; it has a large element of luck which

enters into all things, and it constantly calls for the exercise of the qualities requisite for success in the great game of life—foresight, calculation, combination, and concentration. The rewards for sound judgment and promptitude, for quickness of decision and action when occasion demands, are greater in this than in any other card game. These are sterling merits in a game of skill, and give Royal Auction an undisputed claim to be considered the king of card games.

The poker element makes a strong appeal to human nature, and has made Royal Auction so popular with all classes and both sexes. But the poker element does not consist, as some players wrongly imagine, in bluffing with poor cards, which is always a fatal sort of thing to do. Royal Auction has much of the cunning of poker, and its likeness to that game consists in the declarer having to back his cards against the opponents' cards, and in his being continually required to read the adversaries' hands, and to correctly gauge their idiosyncrasies. As in poker, the losses on good cards may be heavy when they have been backed too high.

Royal Auction has the disadvantage of all games played in partnership: a player is very much in the hands of his partner, and it is most important to know his peculiarities and his methods of play. Insight into the partner's as well as the opponents' temperaments has a great deal to do with success at Auction. The personal equation enters so largely into the game that it is a

question whether it does not spoil it as a game of skill.

The card table is a good place to study character of a sort. The conceit of the Bridge-player has passed into a proverb—every player feels in his inmost heart that he is streets in front of those he plays with. If he only thought so one would not mind, but he sometimes lets other people know his thoughts. What Captain Kennedy said of Chess is equally true of cards. There exists in all human nature a latent seed of snobbishness which contact with cards causes to germinate and sprout. The moral and physical idiosyncrasy of different players presents a curious study to the observer. It is not so difficult to meet a player of unusual insight, rapid powers of inference, and a skill extraordinarily deft as it is to meet with a player possessed of an equanimity which neither success nor defeat has power to disturb. The unruffled equanimity of mind and temper which a man shows in the ordinary affairs of life seems to desert him at the card table. The man who, in ordinary circumstances, will not betray any loss of temper will show a rising impatience and irritability when the fortunes of war are against him and he loses a redoubled contract. He is immediately possessed of a desire to let the table know that his failure is due to bad luck, and by no possible means to bad judgment. Losses at Royal Auction are invariably ascribable to one of three causes: one's bad luck; the good luck of one's opponents; or, the bad play of one's partner.

Some natures are more objectionable in the flush of success, and their boredom is inflicted indiscriminately on both friend and foes. While others—a few it is true, but one wonders why they are ever allowed to play—are bores not inferior in powers of annoyance to either the Ancient Mariner or the Old Man of the Sea.

FIRST PRINCIPLES AND SOME SCHOOLS OF BIDDING.

TWO LEADING SCHOOLS.

WITH the abolition of the compulsory call, the obligation on any player to speak when he has nothing useful to say has disappeared. This has led to some players adopting the tactics of passing with good hands instead of declaring, they prefer to wait.

There are various schools of declaring, and an endless variety of views is held by them; every day something new is suggested. It was so in Bridge, and again in Auction Bridge, and it is inevitably so in Royal Auction.

Familiarity with every school of bidding is helpful in many ways; besides, when one plays with strangers, one does not feel like a cat in a strange garret. But, for all practical purposes, it is sufficient to understand the guiding principles of the different schools.

All of them naturally fall into two leading schools: the one playing a forward, the other a waiting game; the one believing in declaring when they can, the other in lying low with good hands, to hear what the other players have to say before making any disclosure of strength.

Going to the root of the matter, it is the same old question—which is it better to play for, the game and the rubber or the penalty score?

"PILING UP VELVET."

"Piling up velvet" is an expressive Americanism for piling up penalty points. All tall rubbers are the result of tall penalty scores—penalties that often dwarf the rubber bonus. It is foolish to toil and struggle through a number of deals for 250 bonus points when a successful double will yield the player 300 penalty points on one hand. This is an exasperatingly easy piece of q. e. d. reasoning, that in the opinion of some waiting players quite settles the question. Good hands should be utilised not to make the game or rubber, but to defeat adverse contracts: instead of trying to play the hand the declarer should angle for penalty points.

LYING LOW FOR PENALTIES.

Nothing will pay better than lying low in a game in which the bidders are speculatively inclined, and in which they will go risking two and three hundred points for the sake of making two tricks, or to keep the other side from obtaining the contract, even when it is clear that the adversaries cannot win the game.

With players who bid to take part in the conversation, who double on principle, and who will commit Auction *hari kari* by redoubling, naturally more points are to be made by breaking contracts than by making them. In such company, the penalty scores are the ones to play for.

PLAYING FOR THE RUBBER BONUS.

But, if the four players realise that none of them is forced to bid unless he has good reasons for bidding,

such as winning the game or keeping the other side from winning the game, then the penalty points are cut down to a minimum, and the rubber bonus of 250 is by comparison tangible and substantial.

In expert Auction, it is the side that wins the rubber that wins the points. The better the game is known and the better the game is played, the fewer are the occasions in which the winners of the rubber are the losers of points. Unduly big and unduly small rubbers rarely occur in good Auction, and when they do occur they point forcibly to unsoundness in the bidding.

AVERAGE SIZE OF A RUBBER.

It has been computed from statistics of a large number of rubbers, under present day conditions, that the average size of a rubber is 400 points. Assuming that this figure is correct, it will be found to be made up somewhat as follows:—

Rubber bonus	...	...	...	250
Trick score in favour of side				
winning the rubber	...	...		45
Honour score in favour of side				
winning the rubber	...	...		70
				<hr/>
				365
Difference in penalty scores	...			35
				<hr/>
				400

Neither the trick nor the honour score has been estimated at too high a figure. As three-fourths

of the hands are played at no-trumps, royals, or hearts, there is usually a fair honour score in favour of the side winning the rubber. There are double honours, eight honours, a hundred aces, grand and little slams; and taking the average of a large number of rubbers into account, 70 is by no means an inflated figure.

But it is to the smallness of the difference in the penalty scores that it is desired to draw attention. It is seldom that the penalties cancel one another: when they do, it is usually because both sides are given to flag-flying, and then it is just a gamble which side will win the most points.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that, while penalty scores are attractive, they are not necessarily more remunerative than the rubber bonus, and it is a safe policy for the dealer in opening the bidding to try for game when he can, instead of waiting with a good hand for the sake of a doubtful penalty score.

OTHER REASONS FOR WAITING.

Playing for penalty points is the leading idea of the waiting game, but it is by no means its only idea. The important point is, that, with a strong hand, a player should do all he can to encourage adverse bidding, he should give his partner every opportunity to speak, and thus get all the knowledge he can as to the position of the cards. These are good reasons for waiting.

Moreover, it must not be understood that the waiting game is the same game that was played in

the days of Auction Bridge when the dealer would, as a matter of course, declare a non-committal "one spade," and it was obligatory on the partner to take him out.

In Royal Auction, the waiting player skilfully varies his declaration: he will declare with some good hands, and wait with others. He recognises that under-calling a good hand, and passing the declaration in hopes of profiting by the opponents' rash declarations, are tactics that defeat themselves unless they are sparingly used. He carefully sifts the good hands that are useful for declaring from those that are useful to wait with and those that may be useful to defeat adverse bidding.

FLAWS OF THE WAITING GAME.

At best, it is an attempt to play single-handed against two adversaries, and contravenes a first principle of the game. It renders concerted action impossible, because, even if waiting tactics are sparingly used, the partner can never be certain of the dealer's game.

The waiting player assumes that he will have another opportunity to speak, but this is after all only an assumption. He also assumes that the opponents will bid. But there is no certainty about adverse bidding, and many a player who has lain in wait for an opponent's bid is still waiting. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is always safer to assume that the opponents will not bid unless they have the material for bidding.

In a small percentage of good hands it may appear better, instead of giving information, to invite information by making it as easy as possible for the partner to bid, but the dealer by his pass may give a false impression of his holding.

A FORWARD GAME

Forward players believe that the primary object in combining the two hands is to make the rubber. Royal Auction is an attacking game, and, till more is known about the position of the cards, winning the rubber should be the bidder's goal; after he knows how the cards lie, he may decide that more is to be made by using his good cards to defeat an adverse declaration. Forward players agree that defeating an adverse call is often more lucrative than playing the hand, and are quite willing to play for penalties if the opponents show a tendency to flag-flying.

VALUE OF FIRST PRINCIPLES.

The lesson that the battle of the schools teaches is that it is more important to understand the first principles of a game like Royal Auction than it is to memorise its conventions. The only absolute rule of play is to play to win, and if that end is achieved it does not matter how many conventions of the game a player has broken and what theories of probabilities he has ignored. Numerous occasions arise in actual play when it is to a player's advantage to break the conventions of the game,

and, indeed, to know when to throw convention overboard marks the master player, but the violation of first principles is an altogether different matter.

A CARDINAL PRINCIPLE.

Royal Auction is played in partnership, and, like all games played in partnership, combination is necessary to success. The strategy of bidding and playing should be carried out by each side harmoniously, and with a common purpose. The chief flaw in the waiting game is that it ignores the cardinal principle that the game is played in partnership, and that the best results can only be attained by concerted action. Even at the risk of informing the adversaries, one should inform one's partner, because the information is more vital to one's partner than the disclosure is to one's opponents. Two forces of twenty-six cards each are pitted against two similar forces, and the problem before each set of players is how to combine their forces in order to obtain the best results.

These are the same old Whist and Bridge maxims that have done duty any time these fifty years, but it is necessary to reiterate them.

ANOTHER BASIC PRINCIPLE.

Information is the first essential to successful combination, and, in order to attain perfect combination, the preliminary bidding should be informatory and straightforward, and so designed

as to lead up to the most paying bid of which the two hands are capable. It should proceed as an intelligent conversation between partners to enable a joint plan of attack and defence to be carried out.

Another basic principle, therefore, is that the dealer should give his partner early and accurate information in the opening bid; if a false note is struck in the opening bid it is likely to persist throughout the bidding, and may greatly affect the play of the hand.

An obvious and oft-repeated truism is that any disclosure a player makes during the play of the hand is more useful to his partner than it is to the declarer. The information the declarer receives about a particular card tells him on which side it lies. He knows, as soon as the dummy hand goes down, whether the card is in his favour or against him, and the only additional information he obtains is the position of the card. But the information to the partner not only tells him where the card is, but it also tells him whether or not the card is a friendly one. It gives the partner the kind of information the dealer already possesses, and it tends to place him, in regard to that suit, on an equality with the dealer.

From the opening bid to the play of the last card, the information given to the partner is vital, and the accumulated experience of Whist and Bridge has shown that success is better achieved by informing the partner than by deceiving the adversaries.

THE SIX DECLARATIONS.

There are four suit declarations besides no-trumps and nullos. These six declarations, considered from the game-making point of view, should be grouped as follows, in order of their importance :—

- i. No-Trumps.
- ii. Royals and Hearts.
- iii. Nullos.*
- iv. Diamonds and Clubs.

A further classification into the *higher* and the *lesser contracts* is necessary. The higher contracts are no-trumps, royals, and hearts, with nullos on the border line. The lesser contracts are diamonds and clubs.

GAME THE FIRST GOAL

The dealer should assume the offensive, and bid for game when he can. With a good hand, winning the game, which is a stage in the rubber, should be his first goal, and he should if possible select one of the game-winning declarations, *no-trumps*, *royals*, or *hearts*.

When he cannot make a declaration that offers a chance of game, he should try to convey early and reliable information to the partner of the contents of his hand.

* Nullos do not disturb the conventions of declaring. They are included here to indicate the position they would occupy in the scheme of bidding if they are made a part of the orthodox game.

ADVANTAGE OF THE DEAL.

As Royal Auction is an attacking game, it is a decided advantage to get in the first blow. The side having the deal has the attack, and the dealer should indicate the line of attack to enable his partner to support him to the fullest extent the hand warrants.

He should go down the list of declarations, from the most important no-trumps to the least important clubs, keeping the game-winning declarations always in view.

About eighty per cent. of the deals are played at no-trumps or in a major suit, and practically the entire scheme of bidding should be directed to playing the hand in one of the higher contracts.

When the declarer's strength lies in a minor suit, he should not fail to show help for a higher declaration, as it is only in this way that the most can be got out of the two hands. A player greatly simplifies his partner's bid when he accurately describes his own hand.

ADVANTAGE OF PLAYING THE TWO HANDS.

The final declarant is the only one who has twenty-six cards under his control: their sole direction rests with him, and the advantage of playing the two hands may be reckoned as at least equivalent to one trick. Often three or four tricks fall to the declarant which he would not have made if the four hands had been held up. This advantage has to be taken into account in estimating the declaring value of a hand. In opening

the bidding, he has a right to expect average assistance from his partner, and it is as great a mistake to expect too little as it is to expect too much assistance.

AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION.

An important consideration in the opening bid is that it is possible, with the score at love, to win the game in all the six declarations.

Declaration.	Number of Tricks required for Game.
No-Trumps	Three
Royal Spades	Four
Hearts	Four
Nullos	Four
Diamonds	Five
Clubs	Five

All the suits are winning suits: no-trumps heads the list, as the shortest road to game, and next to no-trumps are the two major suits, royals and hearts.

It has been computed that, roughly, thirty per cent. of the games are *played* at no-trumps, and fifty per cent. at one of the two major suit declarations; the balance, twenty per cent., being divided between nullos (seven per cent.), diamonds (eight

per cent.), and clubs (five per cent.). The number of "passed" hands is negligible.*

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE MAJOR AND MINOR SUITS.

These figures deserve careful study, as they show the relative importance of the major and minor suits. While fifty per cent. of the deals are *played* at royals and hearts, only twelve per cent. are *played* at diamonds and clubs. An opening bid of a royal or a heart is rarely changed for a no-trump, whereas an opening bid of a diamond or a club is mainly informatory, and, when more is known as to the lie of the cards, it is frequently changed for no-trump or a major suit.

It is an established canon of declaring to show top cards in a suit bid. This is quite sound, but the four suits cannot be treated exactly alike, and the rule must not be carried to the length of not

* Statistics are being compiled of a large number of rubbers from which these preliminary figures are taken. It is satisfactory to note that they closely agree with the percentages recently published by "Ubique" in the columns of a weekly illustrated journal. "Ubique's" figures are:

No-Trumps	31	%
Royals	29	%
Hearts	21	%
Diamonds	12	%
Clubs	7	%
Pass	(.1)	%

Total 100

declaring a major suit, queen or knave high, with the game in sight.

It is necessary to emphasise this point, as some authorities maintain that the holding of top cards in a major suit, before it can be declared in the opening round, is *de rigueur*, and that unless it is made an invariable rule, the whole structure of informative bidding would collapse. They speak as though it were the rule, and not the exception, for a declaration in a major suit to be shifted to no-trumps. They also presume a second opportunity to enter the bidding after the first refusal to speak.

A declaration of a major suit is not an informative bid: it is a scoring bid; the declarant means to play the hand. A declaration of a minor suit is mainly informative, and the declarer announces top cards *to some purpose*. A diamond or a club should not only indicate ability to fulfil the contract, it should at the same time indicate one or more "quick" tricks in the suit, if the partner is able to give the hand greater value by declaring no-trump.

THE REWARD FOR SOUND DECLARATIONS.

The reward for sound declarations is in the main greater than the return from good play. Skill in the management of the hands will often win an extra trick, but most hands really play themselves, and the extra trick, as everybody knows, is of little importance unless it helps to win the game or fulfil the contract. The correct playing of the

hands may at times be crucial, as when a double has followed a high contract; but the declaration is always vital, and an unsound one may easily run into the loss of hundreds. Admitting that opportunities for subtle play and for bringing off coups occur in almost every rubber, and with greater frequency than the average player has any suspicion of, the occasions in which *the extra trick really counts* are comparatively few. In the large majority of hands play cannot alter the result in the same way that the bidding can.

Moreover, skill in playing the hand requires long practice and experience, but a good working knowledge of the theory of the declaration can be acquired after a few hours' study.

The soundness of the subsequent bidding necessarily depends upon the soundness of the bidding in the first round, and that, in turn, is dependent upon the soundness of the dealer's opening bid. The opening bid is the starting point, and when the elementary principles underlying all sound declarations by the dealer are grasped, the subsequent bidding will be readily understood.

STRAIGHTFORWARD BIDDING PAYS BEST.

It is the straight game that pays, and it pays best in that most important part of the game, the bidding. The idea that was current in the early days of Auction, that the dealer should vary his declarations, is a good poker tip when a player is playing for his own hand, but it is a thoroughly unsound one in a game played in partnership. It

mystifies no one so much as the unfortunate partner, who is seeking reliable information about the declarer's hand; and it results in bidding at cross purposes, and so destroys the harmony of the partnership.

The same thing is true of traps and stratagems in the bidding, which are very fine when they come off; but they are poor Auction. They are usually dependent for their success on a mistake of the adversaries, and should only be attempted by the expert bidder when it is clear to him that the partner cannot be deceived. A mistake of the opponents is always a broken reed to lean upon.

EFFECT OF NULLOS ON THE BIDDING.

The waiting game had a large camp following at Auction Bridge, in the mistaken notion that it was subtle bidding. It was little use pointing out that there was no subtlety in following a recognised system of bidding. The same notion of subtlety is largely responsible for many by no means expert declarers playing the waiting game, and attempting to vary their declarations under the Royal count.

Now that nullos have been invented, there is no danger of the bidding becoming stereotyped. Nullos have imported endless variety into the bidding, as they may be held in combination with almost any kind of hand, from a fine no-trumper to a trickless Yarborough. They announce nothing to the table, except the presence of low cards, in at least three suits, which may or may not be held in combination with high ones. Any one wishing to play *dark* should take up nullos.

THE OPENING BID : ONE NO-TRUMP.

A SOUND NO-TRUMP IS THE BEST OPENING DECLARATION.

IT has already been pointed out that the side having the deal has the attack; and usually, till more is known about the cards, the best line of attack is to declare no-trump.

In the first place, playing without trumps is the shortest road to game; this should be the goal of the declarant until he knows from the other declarations how the cards lie, and sees his way clear to making more than a game is normally worth by defeating an adverse contract.

In the next place, it offers exceptional chances of utilising any strength in the two hands, because the scope for assistance from dummy's hand extends to all the suits. Every experienced player realises that the declarant's advantages in combining the two hands are most telling in playing without trumps.

The declarant, before he plays a single card, has a full knowledge of his resources. The advantages

of knowing what cards are in his favour, where finesses are practicable, and what suits have a chance of being established, are in themselves sufficient to ensure the odd trick to the declarant with all round average hands; and it often happens that two or three tricks accrue to him which he would have failed to obtain if the opponents also had a complete knowledge of their resources.

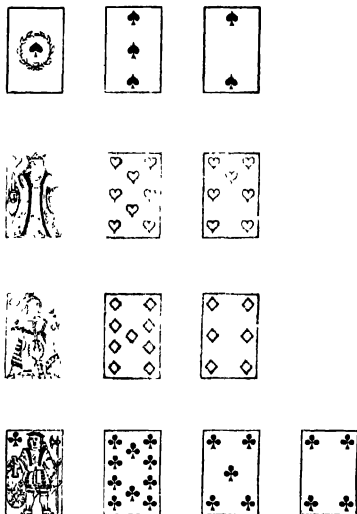
Granting a normal distribution of the cards—that is to say, that the good cards are evenly distributed in the four hands—the side that declares no-trump first gains a great advantage by excluding the other side from declaring no-trump. It forces the opponents to play on the defensive when they might have done very well if they had been the attacking party.

Other good reasons for opening with a no-trump are that

- (i.) it requires “two nullos,” or a suit-bid of two to overcall “one no-trump,” and
- (ii.) it conveys information that may be useful to the third hand in declaring if the dealer is overcalled.

A MINIMUM NO-TRUMPER.

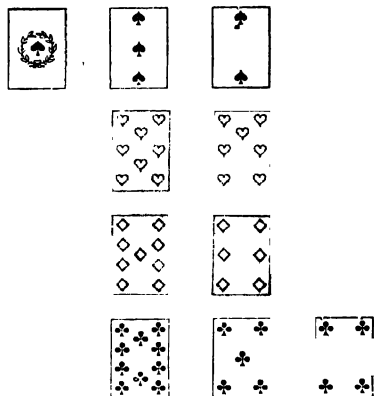
An average hand protected in three suits is the minimum strength on which "one no-trump" should be declared:—



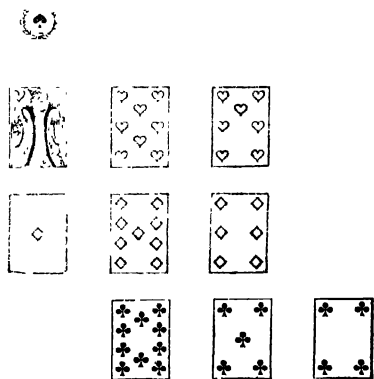
This is a strictly average hand, containing a card of each denomination from the ace to the two. The important cards are the face ones, the honours, ace, king, queen, knave, and ten.

If the ace of diamonds is substituted for the queen, the hand rises as much above

the average as an ace is above the queen in value :—

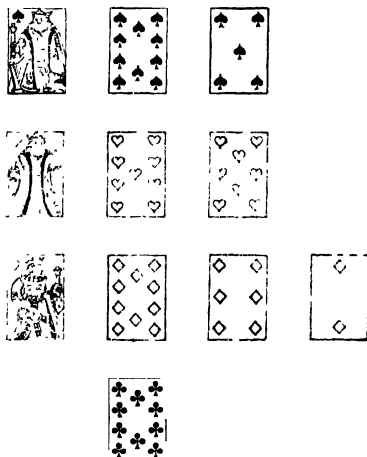


If, now, the queen of spades is substituted for the three the hand will be an ace above the average :



ESTIMATING THE VALUE OF A HAND.

In estimating the declaring value of a hand it is important to know how much it rises above or falls below the average. Without a standard measure of value players go guessing at the strength of their hands, because it is so difficult to say in the case of a mixed hand, in which one or more face cards of the same denomination are held, whether it is above or below average strength. One form of guessing is to assume that an ace is equivalent to a king-queen suit and a king-queen to queen-knave-ten. But with a hand like this guessing is apt to go wrong :—



To meet this difficulty I devised in the early days of Bridge, a scale of values for the five

honours, known as the Robertson Rule. This rule has been extensively misquoted and misapplied. It is only intended to be applied to honours that are properly guarded so as to estimate the strength of a hand with a view to determining whether it warrants a declaration of no-trump :—

For each Ace	count	7
For each King	count	5
For each Queen	count	3
For each Knave	count	2
For each Ten	count	1
		—
		18

Any hand computed in this way that foots up to 18 may be regarded as an average hand, no matter how the bridge honours are distributed.

DISCOUNT SINGLETON ACES AND UNPROTECTED HONOURS.

This scale of values should not be applied to Singleton aces, nor to unprotected kings, queens, knaves, and tens ; but every honour in a properly guarded suit should be allowed full value.

For a Singleton Ace	count	3
For an unguarded King	count	2
For an unguarded Queen	count	1

A Singleton ace, although a certain guard, can be forced out in the first round of a suit, and therefore loses value in playing without trumps. It makes a lot of difference when the command of an adverse suit can be retained till the third round.

REQUIREMENTS OF A NO-TRUMP HAND.

An average hand is not in itself sufficient to declare no-trump. The honours may be massed in one or two suits, and the lead will be with an adversary—there is the danger of an unprotected suit being played. The main requirement of a no-trump hand is that it should be protected in three suits, and a suit should not be regarded as protected unless it contains an ace, a king-queen, or three minor honours in sequence, the queen, knave, ten. Honours not in sequence need to be fully guarded, thus :

King	Knave	7	
King	10	7	
King	8	6	3
Queen	10	3	2
Knave	10	6	2

MINIMUM NO-TRUMPERS.

$$\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \spadesuit \spadesuit \\ \spadesuit \spadesuit \spadesuit \spadesuit \\ \spadesuit \spadesuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \spadesuit \spadesuit \\ \spadesuit \spadesuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad = \quad 3$$

$$\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad = \quad 5$$

$$\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \heartsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \diamondsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \diamondsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad = \quad 3$$

$$\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \clubsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \clubsuit \clubsuit \clubsuit \clubsuit \clubsuit \clubsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \clubsuit \clubsuit \clubsuit \clubsuit \\ \hline \end{array}
 \quad = \quad 7$$

18

THE OPENING BID: ONE NO-TRUMP.

24



= 9



= 3



= 3



= 3

18



= 3



=



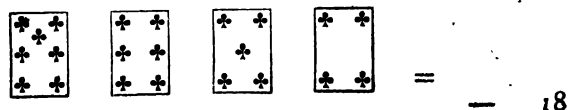
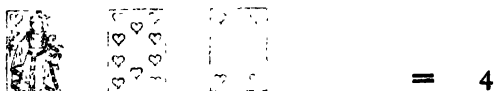
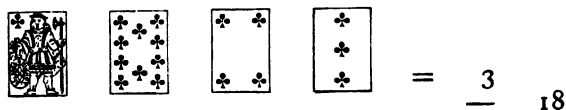
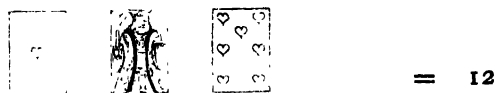
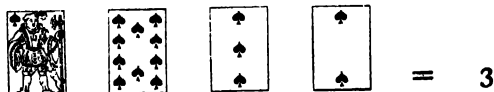
= 8









= 7



18




ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.



			=	5
---	---	---	---	---

			=	5
---	---	---	---	---

				=	3
---	---	---	---	---	---

			=	5
			—	18

AVERAGE HAND NO-TRUMPER.

It is only in the opening bid that an average hand, protected in three suits, is good enough for "one no-trump." It has several good reasons to recommend it in opening the bidding, but it would be an unsound call after an adverse suit bid has been made, even if a guard is held in the declared suit.

With an average holding, there is always the likelihood of the dealer making an extra trick owing to his advantages in playing the two hands; and in normal positions it is sound to reckon on the odd trick with the assistance of dummy, but

once the position of the cards is known the situation is changed.

The bid of a no-trump on a strictly average holding is distinctly light. The partner must understand this, and not raise the bid on insufficient material.

"ONE NO-TRUMP" BETTER THAN A PASS.

The average hand no-trumper is frequently the alternative to passing the declaration, and a very good alternative it often proves to be. The reasoning underlying the call is this. If the dealer holds an average hand and passes, the third hand will also pass the bid with a hand above the average *unless he has decided strength*. A good opportunity will be missed, because there was a fair chance of game if the bidding had been opened with a no-trump.

Passing the declaration will silence the partner, whereas "one no-trump" will encourage him to speak. In a large majority of cases, most useful information is conveyed to the partner when he is told that he may rely on the dealer for at least an average hand, and no fair opportunity of giving this information should be missed.

HOLDINGS ABOVE THE AVERAGE.

It follows that any holding above the average should also be played without trumps, unless the strength of the hand is massed in one suit, and

it would be clearly more advantageous to name a trump.

The call of "one no-trump" should as a rule be confined to the cases in which three guarded suits are held without decided strength in any one suit. With this reservation, no-trumps should be called with :

Three aces,

Two aces and a guarded king or queen in another suit, such as king, knave, and one small or queen, knave, ten,

One ace and protection in two other suits,

Four kings, all of them being guarded,

Three kings with some backing, such as two queens or a queen and a knave,

Four queens all fully protected, with knaves.

THREE-ACE NO-TRUMPERS.

Three aces, none of them being Singletons, have from the dawn of Bridge been regarded as a *jeu de règle* no-trump hand, even without another face card. But such a hand is under the new conditions often a better nullo than a no-trumper, the adverse honours notwithstanding. Such hands have been nicknamed "no-trump nullos," and it is well to be on the look out for chances of bidding nullos with such holdings, as they are very telling

in the bidding. The same remark applies to hands containing two aces and a guarded king.

ACELESS NO-TRUMPERS.

Many forward players who cheerfully declare light no-trumps are chary about declaring without an ace. An ace is a valuable card in playing without trumps, as it is a certain guard and a certain re-entry, and it also has an honour value.

When a no-trumper breaks down it is usually because the other side held the aces, and before the dealer could establish his long suit the other side established theirs. But the dealer may count upon his partner for at least an ace when his own hand is without one. The odds are 9 to 2 on his partner holding one or more, and only 6 to 4 against his partner holding two or more. With fair protection in all the suits the call should not be missed for fear of the aces being held adversely.

The odds before the deal are 378 to 1 against any given player holding the four aces. After one player has looked at his cards and found no aces amongst them, the odds are reduced to 114 to 1. This includes the partner's chances of holding the four aces. The odds against one of the adversaries holding them are 56½ to 1. The risk should cheerfully be faced, provided the other requirements of the no-trumper are present.

STANDARD NO-TRUMPERS.

A well protected hand, with something of value in every suit, is a most useful kind of hand for the call of one no-trump :



= 7



= 6



= 5



= 3

Total 21

Such hands need not be very powerful in themselves, their real value lies in their ability to dovetail with any strength in dummy, and it is mainly on this account that they make successful no-trumpers, besides affording valuable support to a trump declaration.



= 7



= 3



= 3



= 8

— 21



= 3



= 12



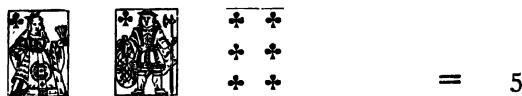
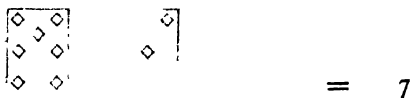
= 3



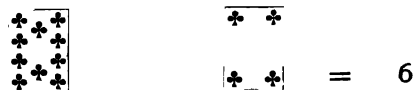
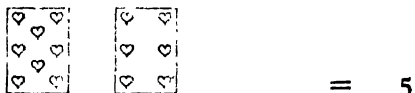
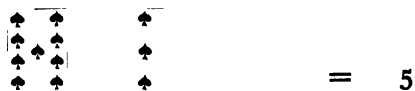
= 3

— 21

THE OPENING BID: ONE NO-TRUMP. 43



21



21



= 3



= 7



= 3



— 21



= 3



= 8



= 7



TWO SUIT NO-TRUMPERS.

There is one exception to the general rule that three suits should be guarded, and that is when a hand contains six or more ready-made tricks in two suits:

I. Royals	9	8	4	
Hearts	Ace	King	Queen	
Diamonds	Ace	King	Queen	3
Clubs	7	6	5	
II. Royals	10	8	6	
Hearts	8	4		
Diamonds	Ace	7		
Clubs	Ace	King	Queen	9 4

In these cases, the additional strength of the hand makes up for the two unprotected suits, but if one of the solid suits is royals or hearts, *and there is also length in the suit*, the dealer should obviously declare a trump.

AGGRESSIVE AND INFORMATORY NO-TRUMPERS.

It will be seen that a no-trumper may be aggressive, informative, and protective.

As an attacking declaration no-trumps takes precedence of suit bids, as only three tricks are required for game from a love score. A well protected hand, with an honour in each suit, so as to stop any suit of the adversary, is an ideal no-trumper, especially when the high cards are evenly

distributed, with no pronounced strength in a major suit. The chief value of such a hand lies in its ability to fit in with any strength in dummy's hand.

One no-trump as an informatory call is very useful, as it enables the partner to make the best bid of which his hand is capable. The average hand no-trumper, protected in three suits, is very different from the sporty no-trumper or Addington that used to be declared blindfold in the early days of Auction, when each trick at no-trump counted twelve and suit calls were easily outbid. If the second player is strong enough to overcall the dealer, the latter is no worse off than if he had passed the declaration, while he has conveyed information that might be helpful to his partner in declaring.

The no-trumper is also useful as an alternative to passing the declaration. "One no-trump" is rarely allowed to remain as the final bid. If it is allowed to stand, no great harm is likely to result, as it is probable the hands are evenly divided, and the declarant's advantages in seeing and combining two hands may be depended upon to obtain the odd trick required to fulfil the contract.

NO-TRUMPS AND NULLOS.

With the introduction of nullos, the declaration of "one no-trump" seldom obtains the contract.

No-trumps and nullos are at opposite poles. In playing no-trumps, the important cards are the aces, kings, and queens: in playing nullos, the important cards are the deuces, threes, and fours. Unprotected suits, especially if they are Singletons or blank suits, are particularly bad holdings at no-trumps, and when a no-trumper comes to grief it is usually over such holdings: at nullos, blank suits and Singletons are elements of strength, and the success of a nullo is largely dependent on them.

THE OPENING BID : ROYALS AND HEARTS.

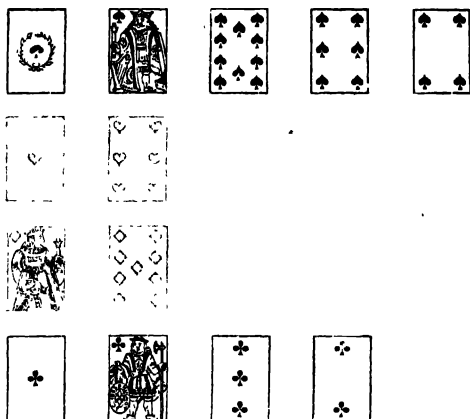
THE MAJOR SUIT CONTRACTS.

SO far as winning the game from a love score is concerned, royals and hearts have precisely the same value, as four tricks are in both cases required for game. They are known as the major suit contracts, and about fifty per cent. of the games at Royal Auction are *played* at one or other of these two declarations, as they offer the best chance of making game in the deal. Any one who has played Royal Auction regularly must have remarked with what surprising ease even high contracts in these suits are carried through with success.

The great drawback to no-trump is that it is so liable to be overcalled by the suit declarations ; and when it is overcalled its points of weakness are laid bare so glaringly.

ROYALS AND HEARTS IN PREFERENCE TO NO-TRUMP.

When a hand admits of any doubt between no-trump and one of the major suits, royals, or hearts, it is a sound rule, that admits of very few exceptions, to give the suit the benefit of the doubt.



This hand amply fulfils the requirements of a no-trumper, and many players cannot resist the temptation of declaring no-trump, as one trick less is required for game from a love score. There is, however, such an obvious risk of the short suits being established against the declarer before he can establish his long suit of spades, that it is unsound to bid a no-trump when there is such an excellent chance of game with royals as trumps. Unless the no-trumper contain a double guard in each suit, there is always the danger of a long suit being made against it.

If in this hand the spades and the clubs are transposed, it would be sound to call a no-trump, because two tricks more would be required for game with clubs as trumps.

THE EXTRA TRICK.

It needs three tricks in no-trumps, and four tricks in royals or hearts, to make game from a

love score. The bogey of the extra trick is responsible for many players declaring no-trump when there is more safety and more profit in playing with a trump.

With length in one suit, there is likelihood of one or more suits being short, with considerable risk in no-trump. Adversaries have a keen scent for weak spots, and will run away with five or six tricks before the dealer has a look in.

Blank suits and Singletons are deadly for no-trumps. Even if dummy has length in the suit, the dealer cannot do much with a Singleton to assist in establishing it. The risk disappears with a declared trump, and a Singleton or a blank suit, from a weak spot, changes into an asset.

While a long trump suit soon establishes itself, even without the high cards, a plain suit lacking in the high cards needs support in the side suits. Also, the holders of the long trump are able with its help to bring in any long suit in either partner's hand, so that in normal positions it is easier to make four tricks in royals or hearts than it is to make three tricks in no-trumps.

Experience at the card table shows that high suit contracts are easier to carry through with success than high no-trump contracts, and they are less liable to come to grief when doubled. When a no-trump contract breaks down, it is usually a bad break-down, which is not the case with a sound suit bid.

With any of the following hands the long suit should be called in preference to declaring no-trump.

"NOT NO-TRUMP."

Royals	...	Ace	Queen	Knave	8	4
Hearts	...	Queen	8	3		
Clubs	...	King	Queen	5	4	
Diamonds	...	Knave				

Royals	...	Knave	10	9	8	
Hearts	...	Ace	King	9	7	6
Clubs	...	Ace				
Diamonds	...	Queen	10	3		

Royals	...	King	Queen	Knave	7	2
Hearts	...	Ace	10			
Clubs	.	King	Knave	3		
Diamonds	...	10	9	7		

Royals	...	Ace				
Hearts	...	Ace	10	9	6	2
Clubs	...	King	8	4		
Diamonds	.	King	Queen	Knave		

DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MAJOR AND
MINOR SUITS.

There is a distinction between the major suit contracts, royals and hearts, and the minor suit contracts, diamonds and clubs. A bid in a major suit shows a desire to play the hand with the trump named, and however strong the partner may be he should not, except for cogent reasons, overcall the dealer. A bid in a minor suit shows a willingness to play the hand with the trump *provided* the partner cannot make a better declaration, that is, one that offers a better chance of

game. The one asks for support in the suit named and does not wish to be taken out, the other is quite willing to be taken out in a more valuable declaration. This differentiates a bid in a major suit from a bid in a minor suit.

THE EXTRA TRICK REQUIRED FOR GAME.

The additional trick that is required for game makes all the difference. Five by cards is difficult to get except with overwhelming strength in the trump suit as well as strong support in the side suits. When therefore there is a doubt between no-trumps and the minor suit declarations, the benefit of the doubt should be given to the no-trumper. Turning to the hands on the preceding page, if the major and the minor suits are transposed they should all be played without trumps, as that would be the shortest road to game.

LIGHT SUIT BIDS A MISTAKE.

While there is much to be said in favour of a light no-trump, there is no justification for a light suit bid. Whether it be a major or a minor suit, it should contain four fairly certain and one probable trick; and at least two of the tricks should be in the trump suit. Unless the hand is able to pass this minimum test, it is not a sound suit call.

The first requirement of a suit bid is that it should be headed by top honours, such as,

Ace, King; Ace, Queen; Ace, Knave; Ace, ten;
Ace; King, Queen; King, Knave; King, ten.

With only numerical strength it is generally considered better to wait till the second round of the bidding.

This is the general rule that applies to all the suit bids, royals, hearts, diamonds, and clubs, but while there are many exceptions in declaring royals and hearts, the rule should be rigidly followed in declaring diamonds and clubs. Freak hands excepted, it would be thoroughly unsound if the opening declaration in a minor suit were made with only numerical strength.

Many able declarers show a strange inability to appreciate the facts of the situation when they hold a strong hand that offers a chance of game in a major suit without the top cards in the suit. A salient fact is that while fifty per cent. of the games at Royal Auction are played in the major suit declarations, less than fifteen per cent. are played in the minor suit declarations. The additional trick required in the minor suits makes all the difference between an attacking bid and an informatory one. The major suit bids are not informatory, and it never was a sound proposition to treat the four suits exactly alike.

A royal or a heart announces a chance of game, while a diamond or a club only announces ability to fulfil the contract, and means: "I have help for you, partner, if you can make a more paying declaration." Here is the parting of the ways between the major and the minor suit declarations: the one does not seek to be overcalled by the partner, the other does.

ROYALS OR HEARTS ?

"One heart" may be called on precisely the same strength as "one royal." From a game-going point of view the two bids may be regarded as equally valuable.

A question that has aroused some discussion is what the dealer should do when there is a choice between them, that is, with fairly equal strength in the two suits, should he give hearts or royals the preference? It is urged that by first calling hearts the declarer gives himself an opportunity to branch to royals if he is doubled, without any increase of contract, and the declarer also has an opportunity to call royals if his original heart bid is overcalled by an adverse no-trump, and the partner has failed to raise the heart bid, showing that he cannot help in hearts—he may have valuable help in royals. On the other hand, by calling royals first, and hearts if necessary on the second round, the partner is given the opportunity to shew that royals suit his hand better without increasing the contract.

The safe rule to follow with all two suit hands is to declare the one of higher value first.

MINIMUM STRENGTH.

The table that follows shows the minimum strength required for an original "one royal" or "one heart" bid with the score at love all. With any additional strength in the side suits, the chances of going game in the hand would be greatly increased.

TABLE OF "ONE ROYAL" AND "ONE HEART" BIDS.

Trump Suit	Estimated number of tricks in the trump suit		Tricks needed in the side suits to bring the hand up to the minimum declaring value	
	Certain	Probable	Certain	Probable
*Ace Kg. Qn. Kn.	four	...	...	...
*Ace Kg. Qn. 10	four	...	...	...
*Ace Kg. Kn. 10	three	one	...	one
*Ace Qn. Kn. 10	three	one	...	one
Ace Kg. Qn. 4	three	one	..	one
*Kg. Qn. Kn. 10	three	...	one	...
Ace Kg. Qn. 6 3	four	one	...	...
Ace Kg. Kn. 6 3	four	...	...	one
Ace Kg. 10 6 3	four	...	...	one
Ace Kg. 8 6 3	four	...	...	one
Ace Qn. Kn. 6 3	four	...	...	one
Ace Qn. 10 6 3	four	...	...	one
Kg. Qn. Kn. 6 3	four	...	...	one
Ace Qn. 8 6 3	three	one	one	...
Ace Kn. 10 5 4	three	one	one	...
Ace Kn. 8 5 4	three	one	one	...
Kg. Qn. 10 5 4	three	one	one	...
Kg. Qn. 3 5 4	three	one	one	...
Kg. Kn. 10 4 2	three	one	one	...
Ace 10 8 4 2	three	...	one	one
Kg. Kn. 7 5 3	three	...	one	one
Kg. 10 7 5 3	three	...	one	one
Ace Kg. 7 6 5 4	five	...	...	...
Ace Qn. 7 6 5 4	four	one	...	...
Ace Kn. 7 6 5 4	four	one	...	...
Ace 10 7 6 5 4	four	...	...	one
Ace 8 7 6 5 4	four	...	...	one
Kg. Qn. 8 7 3 2	four	one	...	...
Kg. Kn. 8 7 3 2	four	...	...	one
Kg. 10 8 7 3 2	four	...	...	one

* The value of honours has to be reckoned in making the declaration.

It should be explained what is meant by a certain and a probable trick: an ace or the king and queen of a suit may be regarded as a certain trick; and a fully protected king, when the queen is not also present, as a probable trick; the queen, knave, ten of a side suit is a doubtful trick; but the sequence may afford material assistance in playing a major suit declaration. When the sequence heads a five card suit, its value is greatly increased. All five card suits headed by an honour are valuable when length in trumps is held.

Blank suits and Singletons are also of great help to the declarer, but the mistake of counting the same trick twice should be carefully guarded against. *In the table of minimum royal or heart hands, the trump suit has been appraised at its full value.*

A light royal or heart is a dangerous call, as the partner is likely to advance the bid if he has any support to offer. A sound rule is for the dealer not to call royals or hearts unless he desires to play the hand with the trump, and he also desires the partner's support in the bid if he is overcalled.

The foregoing table of bids has intentionally been framed on a conservative basis, as there are some players who still cling to the idea of "showing suit." The old theory has been quite discarded in favour of a system of conservative suit bids on which the declarer is able to play the hand, and which enables the subsequent bidding to rest on a sure foundation.

THE OPENING BID : DIAMONDS AND CLUBS.

REQUIREMENTS OF A BID IN A MINOR SUIT.

THE well-worn and threadbare saying ~~that~~ Royal Auction is a game of aces and kings should be remembered when the dealer is tempted to declare a diamond or a club without the top cards.

The first requirement of a bid in a minor suit is that it should be headed by such high cards as

Ace,	King,	
Ace,	Queen,	
Ace,	Knave,	
King,	Queen,	Knave,
King,	Queen.	

Queen-suits and knave-suits are barred in the opening bid because they deceive the partner as to the trick-making value of the declared suit.

With only length, it is always better to wait till the second round of the bidding, when the long suit may be useful in forcing an adverse declaration, or in rescuing the partner.

The second requirement, common to all suit bids, is, that there should, as a rule, not be fewer than five cards of the suit called. Strength alone, without length, is dangerous, as the partner might oversupport the bid when he cannot make a more attacking one.

FIVE BY CARDS REQUIRED FOR GAME.

Five by cards is a tall order, and as it is so difficult to make the game from a love score, the primary object in declaring diamonds and clubs should be to convey useful information to the partner regarding the high cards in the declared suit. A bid of "one diamond" or "one club" is therefore mainly informatory. While it should show ability to play the hand with the trump named, it should at the same time indicate one or more "quick tricks" in the suit, if the partner is able to make a more paying declaration.

If the call will not help the partner to declare no-trump, it may at least help to direct his lead against a no-trump. Hence the dictum, "any suit that is worth having led is worth a bid."

At the same time it is an accepted convention that there should be no unplayable suit bids, that is to say, no player should name a suit trump unless he is able to play the hand, and to fulfil his contract, in the suit.

INFORMATORY BIDS OF DIAMONDS AND CLUBS.

Before the royal count was invented, informatory bids of diamonds and clubs were made with the object of leading up to no-trump. A large majority of hands were played without trumps, and the suit declarations (hearts excepted) were looked upon as invitations to no-trump.

The minor suit declarations have now acquired greater importance, as it is possible to win the

game from a love score in both diamonds and clubs, while the competing value of the no-trumper has been reduced from 12 to 10.

This is an important consideration, but it is not very helpful to obtain the contract unless the declarer has a fair chance of making the game.

"PARTIAL GAMES."

The inexpert bidder has a weakness for partial games. He has an idea that if he advances his score to a useful stage he will have a better chance of game in the next deal. There are no stepping stones to game in Royal Auction: game is usually reached at one bound.

But if the declarer's score places diamonds or clubs within four tricks of game, they naturally become as valuable from the game-winning point of view as royals or hearts with a love score. The score then promotes the minor suits to the rank of the major suits.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN A MINOR AND A MAJOR SUIT DECLARATION.

It is incorrect under the new conditions to regard diamond and club bids as purely informative, but it is equally incorrect to regard them as game-winning declarations, and to place them in the same category as royals and hearts.

While the table of minimum royal and heart bids is applicable to diamond and club bids, the main requirement of a major suit declaration is *length*,

whereas the main requirement of a minor suit declaration is *strength*.

Opening bids in the minor suits may be made when only four trumps are held for the purpose of conveying information to the partner. Such holdings as

Ace	King	10	6	} with one probable trick outside the trump suit.
Ace	Queen	Knave	6	
Ace	King	7	6	

King	Queen	Knave	6	with an ace in a side suit.
------	-------	-------	---	--------------------------------

King	Queen	9	6	with an ace and king in a side suit.
------	-------	---	---	---

would be bad opening bids at royals or hearts, but quite sound opening bids at diamonds and clubs.

DANGER OF DECLARING A MINOR SUIT WITH FEWER THAN FIVE TRUMPS.

It should be clearly understood that informatory bids, leading up to more paying declarations, should be confined to a good diamond or club suit of not fewer than four cards in which the declarer is prepared to play the hand. On no account should a three-card suit (even ace, king, queen, with an outside ace) be declared trumps.

The fear that the partner might advance the bid to two, or even three, has to be taken into account. But if the dealer is to wait till he holds length, as well as high cards, in the suit, his chances of declaring are greatly diminished, and opportunities will be lost of affording useful information to the

partner. The bidder has to steer a mean course between the danger of his partner advancing the bid, and the danger of deceiving him as to the character of the dealer's hand. With such four-card holdings as those given above the alternative to declaring a minor suit would be a pass, which would be misleading to the third player.

The partner should not advance the bid unless he holds some strength in the suit, and sufficient outside support to fully justify his raising the bid : if this is understood, the danger of calling from a four-card suit disappears.

INFERENCES TO BE DRAWN FROM THE BID.

The inferences the partner should draw from the bid of "one diamond" or "one club" are—

- i. that the declarer has two tricks in the suit named,
- ii. that the declarer's hand is good enough for four probable tricks with the trump named,
- iii. that the declarer has not less than four trumps, and that he has an expectation of winning the odd trick with average support from his partner.

The information regarding the high cards in the declared suit will help the partner in calling no-trumps or one of the two game-going declarations, royals and hearts.

If the partner knows he can trust the declarer for two tricks in the suit named, it greatly

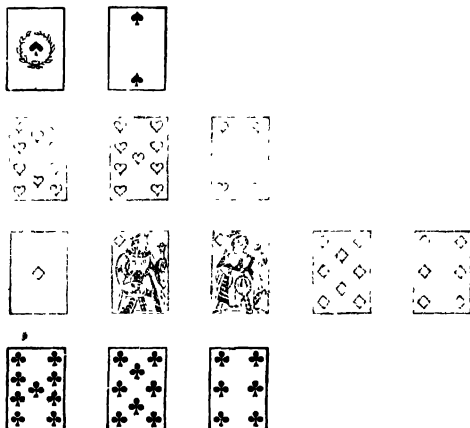
simplifies his declaration as well as the play of the hand against an adverse attacking declaration.

It is precisely on such information that the maximum combined values of the two hands can be obtained, but if the call in a minor suit is restricted to cases in which both length (five or more cards) and strength are held, much useful information is liable to be withheld.

NO-TRUMP IN PREFERENCE TO A MINOR SUIT.

When there is a choice between no-trump and one of the minor suits, no-trump should be given the benefit of the doubt, provided at least three suits are protected. When only two suits are protected, it is safer to name a trump unless the hand contains six or more ready made tricks in two suits, such as—

I.—



II.-



With hands of this character, the chance of making the game in no-trump should not be missed.

Whenever there is a choice in the declaration, the decision must depend on which declaration offers the better chance of winning game. Four tricks are more likely with a trump than without a trump, therefore a call in the major suits, royals and hearts, should be preferred to playing without trumps. On the other hand, three tricks without trumps are more likely to be made than five tricks with a declared trump, and therefore no-trumps should be selected in preference to a call of diamonds or clubs.

NO-TRUMP IN PREFERENCE TO A DIAMOND OR A CLUB.

Royals	...	King	Queen	4				
Hearts	...	8						
Diamonds	..	Ace	Knave	10	8	3	2	
Clubs	..	King	10	6				
Royals	..	King	8	6				
Hearts	..	Ace	3	2				
Diamonds	..	Ace	King	7	6	4		
Clubs	..	8	5					
Royals	..	Ace	10					
Hearts	...	Knave						
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	Knave	6	3		
Clubs		Queen	Knave	8				
Royals	.	8	4					
Hearts	.	9	7	6				
Diamonds	.	Ace	10					
Clubs	.	Ace	King	Queen	6	5	4	
Royals	.	8	6					
Hearts	.	King	2					
Diamonds	.	King	Queen	Knave				
Clubs		Ace	King	10	7	6	2	
Royals	..	10						
Hearts	.	King	8	6				
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	6				
Clubs	...	Ace	King	Queen	Knave	6	2	

OPENING BIDS OF "TWO," "THREE," AND "FOUR."

NO INFLEXIBLE RULE FOR DECLARING.

A GREAT deal has been written about the futility of shut-out or pre-emptive bidding. A shut-out bid is an effort, frequently attended with failure, on the part of the declarer to prevent either adversary disclosing the strength of his hand to the other, with a view to thwart the possible establishment of a no-trump or other adverse game-winning declaration. In nine cases out of ten, such bidding is unnecessary, but in the tenth case it may be very effective. There is no inflexible rule for declaring.

It is unnecessary for the dealer to bid "two" when a bid of "one" will be equally effective in obtaining the contract. But when the cards "pack," as so frequently happens in Royal Auction, the bidding has a tendency to run high, if the partners playing against the dealer are allowed to get into conversation. When the dealer has an exceptional holding, he should be on the look out for exceptional holdings in the other three hands.

"FREAK HANDS."

"Ace of Spades," speaking of the common complaint of the cards "packing," points out that when one player finds seven or more cards of a suit in

his hand, the probabilities are strongly in favour of some other suit being found similarly monopolised by the other players. This abnormality may extend to the holding of the high cards or to the numerical distribution. In either case, it has an important bearing on the declaration.

When freak hands occur, and every player knows the frequency with which they do occur, there is likely to be high bidding on both sides. With a long trump suit, each side has a good chance of making the game; and if the rubber game is being played the bidding naturally gets brisk in the effort to secure the contract, and to keep the other side from going game.

WHEN TO DISCOURAGE ADVERSE BIDDING.

The dealer has the first opportunity to speak, and when he has a "scoring" declaration open to him he has to decide whether he will give the other side a chance to speak, or whether he should declare up to the full value of his hand, and thus, if possible, silence adverse bidding. This is where the advantage of the deal comes in, and the problem before the dealer is, whether it is to his advantage to encourage or to discourage adverse bidding.

With all-round strength, it is advisable to encourage adverse bidding, as it increases the chances of penalising rash bids. Moreover, it is generally advisable to give the partner an opportunity to speak. But if the dealer's strength is entirely, or almost entirely, contained in one suit,

and he has pronounced weakness in a major suit, it is likely that one of his opponents holds strength in that suit, and the dealer might later be forced beyond his depth, and be compelled to leave one of his opponents to play the dummy hand, and possibly make the game. When this risk is present, it is advisable to shut-out any opposing bid.

THREE CONDITIONS NECESSARY.

The assumption of a bigger contract than is strictly necessary is only justified:

- i. when the hand warrants the bid,
- ii. when the declarer does not wish his partner to change the bid.
- iii. when the declarer has reason to fear an adverse bid.

When all these conditions are present the dealer should pre-empt the bid, but seldom or never otherwise.

"TWO NO-TRUMPS."

There are disadvantages in opening the bidding with "two no-trumps." It may shut out a productive bid of the partner, with potential honours, and it unnecessarily discourages adverse bidding, which it is to the dealer's advantage to encourage when he holds a strong all-round hand.

Ordinarily, an opening bid of "two no-trumps" should only be made with such rare holdings as six established diamonds or clubs and another ace. The object of the "two" bid is to prevent the

adversaries from disclosing their strength, especially in the major suits. It handicaps them in bidding, as well as in leading. It compels them to open with "three royals," "three hearts," or "three diamonds," or to leave the dealer to play the hand.

In the majority of cases, the dealer is allowed to play the hand, as it is a big risk to call "three" in a suit, over "two no-trumps," without hearing from the partner; and the dealer secures the further advantage of a blind lead from the second player.

"TWO NO-TRUMPS."

Royals	...	Ace	6					
Hearts	...	8	6					
Diamonds	..	Ace	King	Queen	5	4	3	
Clubs	...	7	5	4				

Royals	...	7	6					
Hearts	...	King	6					
Diamonds	...	King	5	4				
Clubs	...	Ace	King	Queen	6	5	4	

Royals	...	6	5					
Hearts	...	King	Queen	7				
Diamonds	...	6	5					
Clubs	...	Ace	King	Queen	5	4	3	

"Two no-trumps" is particularly effective in playing the rubber game, as the other side are likely to take long chances in the effort to keep the dealer from going game. It is practically the only

time when the bid should be made 'with all-round strength, because it offers a rare chance of penalising rash bids; and when it is not overcalled, it secures a blind lead from the second player.

SUIT BIDS OF "TWO."

There is a marked distinction between an opening bid of "*two*" in a major suit, and an opening bid of "*two*" in a minor suit.

A bid of "two royals" or "two hearts" is an effort to shut out adverse bidding, and to intimate to the partner a desire to play the hand in the declared trump. It is a "scoring" bid which discourages the partner from overcalling except for very cogent reasons.

A bid of "*two diamonds*" or "*two clubs*" is, on the other hand, an informatory bid, which invites the partner to give the hand greater value, if possible, by overcalling in a game-winning declaration—preferably no-trumps. The caller has no particular desire, as he has in the case of a major suit bid of "*two*," to play the hand in the declared suit.

The bids are made under entirely different conditions, and *with entirely different holdings*, and it is necessary to emphasize this, in order that there should be no misunderstanding.

"TWO ROYALS" AND "TWO HEARTS."

To justify an opening bid of "two royals" or "two hearts," the dealer's hand should be worth at least six tricks.

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

Royals	...	King	Queen	10	6	5	4
Hearts	...	8					
Diamonds	...	Ace	Queen	5	4		
Clubs	...	7	6				
Royals	...	6					
Hearts	...	King	Queen	Knave	9	6	4
Diamonds	...	9	8				
Clubs	...	Ace	Knave	6	2		
Royals	...	Ace	King	9	7	6	4
Hearts	...	3					
Diamonds	..	9	8	6			
Clubs	..	King	Queen	Knave			
Royals	...	5	2				
Hearts	...	Ace	Queen	Knave	10	8	7
Diamonds	..	King	Knave	8	5		
Clubs	...	6					

FEEBLE SHUT-OUT BIDS.

The dealer may call "two hearts" on the same strength as he would call "two royals," but an opening bid of "two hearts" is only a feeble effort to shut out adverse bidding. The heart suit has the chance of being overcalled by the same number of royals, and, when it is a question of numerical strength only, the latter suit is decidedly the more valuable as a shut-out bid.

When the dealer wishes to pre-empt the bidding, he should do it in royals. Royal bids are so effective because they require an extra trick in hearts, and the same number of tricks in no-trumps, to overcall them.

"TWO DIAMONDS" AND "TWO CLUBS."

It has gradually been recognised as a convention that a bid of "*two*" in a minor suit means a solid suit, an ace, king, queen to five or more, and nothing else of value in the hand. Although incidentally these calls shut out bids of "one" in any declaration, their purely informatory character should be clearly understood.

It is also a convention with some players to pass the declaration when holding a suit of *clubs*, such as ace, king, queen to six, and nothing else of value in the hand. It must be distinctly understood that this is only when the dealer holds strength in *clubs*, and not in *diamonds*. The dealer passes in the hope of an adverse no-trump being declared, and he would obviously frustrate his object if he were to announce strength in *clubs*.

There is little point in making this distinction between two suits of equal game-making value, but the real objection to the convention is that it withholds information that may be useful to the partner in declaring. This is the weak point of passing the declaration with any good hand. The better the hand, the better the reason for declaring.

Two players, who exchange information in the bidding, are better able to combine their hands for attack and defence, and to arrive at the most paying bid of which the two hands are capable, than two others who conceal their holdings in order to lie in wait for the adversaries.

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

Royals	...	Knave	3				
Hearts	...	9	7				
Diamonds	...	Ace	King	Queen	6	5	4
Clubs	...	10	8	2			

Royals	...	7	5				
Hearts	...	8	4				
Diamonds	...	Queen	3	2			
Clubs	...	Ace	King	Queen	9	7	6

Royals	...	Queen	4				
Hearts	...	10	4	3			
Diamonds	...	Ace	King	Queen	6	4	
Clubs	...	7	5	4			

Royals	...	8	7				
Hearts	...	10	3				
Diamonds	...	Knave	8	2			
Clubs	...	Ace	King	Queen	8	5	4

SUIT BIDS OF "THREE."

A bid of "three" in a major suit, royals or hearts, should mean that the declarer's hand is good enough for at least seven tricks.

A bid of "three royals" is especially useful in shutting out adverse hearts, as a player must be exceptionally strong to risk "four hearts" as an original bid without having heard from his partner.

A bid of "three" in a minor suit, diamonds or clubs, should mean that the declarer has a reasonable expectation of making the game, *or that the*

hand is of no value except with the declared trump.

With unusual length in a minor suit without the requisite strength to aid a no-trump declaration, an opening bid of "three" is useful both to shut out adverse bidding and to warn the partner.

The distinction between a bid of "two" in a minor suit as an informatory bid showing assistance for no-trump and a bid of "three" to show that the hand is of no value in no-trump should be thoroughly grasped.

"THREE ROYALS" AND "THREE HEARTS."

Royals	...	Queen	Knave	10	9	6	3
--------	-----	-------	-------	----	---	---	---

Hearts	...	4					
--------	-----	---	--	--	--	--	--

Diamonds	...	King	Queen	10	7		
----------	-----	------	-------	----	---	--	--

Clubs	...	Ace	King				
-------	-----	-----	------	--	--	--	--

Royals	...	King	Queen	10	7	6	5
--------	-----	------	-------	----	---	---	---

Hearts	...	6	5				
--------	-----	---	---	--	--	--	--

Diamonds	...	Ace	2				
----------	-----	-----	---	--	--	--	--

Clubs	...	King	Queen	3			
-------	-----	------	-------	---	--	--	--

Royals	...	4					
--------	-----	---	--	--	--	--	--

Hearts	...	Ace	King	10	9	7	5
--------	-----	-----	------	----	---	---	---

Diamonds	...	Queen	Knave	8			
----------	-----	-------	-------	---	--	--	--

Clubs	...	Ace	Queen	10			
-------	-----	-----	-------	----	--	--	--

Royals	...	5					
--------	-----	---	--	--	--	--	--

Hearts	...	Queen	Knave	9	8	7	6
--------	-----	-------	-------	---	---	---	---

Diamonds	...	Ace	King	Knave			
----------	-----	-----	------	-------	--	--	--

Clubs	...	Ace	8	6			
-------	-----	-----	---	---	--	--	--

"THREE DIAMONDS" AND "THREE CLUBS."

Royals	...	8							
Hearts	...	4							
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	Knave	10	5	4	3	
Clubs	...	Ace	King	Knave	4				

Royals									
Hearts	...	King	Queen	4					
Diamonds	...	Queen	10	9	7	5	4	3	2
Clubs	...	Ace	Queen						

Royals	...	9	4						
Hearts	...								
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	Knave	4				
Clubs	...	Ace	Queen	9	8	6	5	3	

Royals	...	6	2						
Hearts	...	Ace	King	Queen					
Diamonds	...	7							
Clubs	...	King	Knave	10	7	4	3	2	

SUIT BIDS OF "FOUR."

The assumption of a high opening contract should, as a rule, be reserved for the rubber game.

It requires a phenomenal hand to make an opening suit bid of "four." There is general agreement that if it is in a major suit it should announce nine sure tricks, and if it is in a minor suit it should announce ten sure tricks. The dummy hand is only relied upon for one trick to make the game, a trick that usually accrues to the player of the two hands.

A high bid is unsound unless in the first place the declarer is able to make his contract, and even then it is only justified if the declarer fears an adverse bid, or he does not want his partner to change the declaration.

The main idea in shut-out bidding is that the declarer fears that, later in the bidding he may be forced beyond his depth. It is accepting a small initial risk to save a bigger risk later, but the assumption of any risk is rarely right except in playing the rubber game.

"When in doubt, bid one" is a sound rule for the opening bid.

PASSING THE DECLARATION.

THE ART OF PASSING.

WHEN the dealer's holding is below the minimum required for an attacking or an informatory bid, and he has not the necessary low cards required for a nullo bid, he should pass. In opening the bidding, one must be content to say nothing when one has nothing to say.

The art of passing is one of the last things a player learns to do well at Auction, whether it be passing as dealer or after an adverse bid.

The eagerness some players display to bid on borderline hands is bad enough, but bids are sometimes made on hands below the borderline with no reasonable hope of the game, and without any useful indication to the partner.

The cases to be considered are :

- i. Hands that are not good enough for no-trump, either because they are below the average or because only two suits are protected.
- ii. Hands on which a suit declaration is barred for want of the top cards, or because the suit lacks length.
- iii. Hands on which nullo cannot be called, for want of low cards in three suits.

A pass by the dealer denotes the absence of an average hand protected in three suits. It does not deny the holding of a long weak suit headed by a queen or knave, or the holding of a short suit headed by ace and king. The dealer's cards may be quite good enough to re-enter the bidding in the second and subsequent rounds. He may have a good forcing hand to overcall an adverse bid or a good supporting hand to raise the partner's bid.

HANDS ON WHICH THE DECLARATION SHOULD BE PASSED.

"NOT NO-TRUMP."

Spades	...	Ace	6		
Hearts	...	9	8	4	2
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	10	3
Clubs	...	Knave	9	6	

Spades		9	6	4	
Hearts		King	7	6	
Diamonds		Queen	7	5	
Clubs		King	Queen	10	4

Spades		9	8	7	4
Hearts		King	Queen	Knave	
Diamonds		Ace	Queen	10	
Clubs		10	6	5	

Spades		King	Queen	9	6
Hearts		8			
Diamonds		Queen	10	6	5
Clubs		Queen	9	7	4

"NOT SUIT BIDS."

Spades	...	Ace	Queen	6	4
Hearts	...	9	6	5	
Diamonds	...	Ace	King	3	
Clubs	...	9	7	6	

Spades		8					
Hearts		King	Knave	9	6		
Diamonds		Queen	Knave	9	7,	6	5
Clubs		8	6				

Spades		Queen	8				
Hearts		Queen	Knave	7	6	5	4
Diamonds		9	6	3			
Clubs		King	Queen				

Spades		King	5				
Hearts		10	9	5			
Diamonds		Queen	7	6			
Clubs		King	9	8	7	6	

"NOT NULLOS."

Spades	...	Queen		5			
Hearts	...	10	9	6	2		
Diamonds	...	9	8	7			
Clubs	...	Knave		2			

Spades	...	10	8	3			
Hearts	...	Knave	10	5	2		
Diamonds	...	Queen	6	4			
Clubs	...	10	8	6			

Spades	...	9		
Hearts	...	King	Queen	6 5
Diamonds	...	9	8	6 3
Clubs	...	Knave	10	8 2

Spades	...	10	9	6 2
Hearts	...	6	5	
Diamonds	...	Knave	9	5 4
Clubs	...	Knave	7	4

PASSING WITH GOOD HANDS.

With the abolished spade, the obligation on the dealer's part to bid has disappeared, but some players pass the declaration with good hands to hear what the other three players have to say.

The idea is that with a good hand the dealer should let every source of information be free, as it is greatly to his advantage to hear what the partner has to say, as well as what the opponents have to say. He should learn all he can about the position of the cards; he can then decide whether to go for game or to play to defeat an adverse bid.

It is assumed that the dealer will have another opportunity to speak, and it is also assumed that the opponents will bid. It has already been pointed out that there is no certainty about adverse bidding, and many a player who has lain in wait for an adverse bid is still waiting. The opponents will not be obliging enough to bid unless they have the material for bidding. There is no guarantee that the other players will not pass, and then the

dealer's good hand will be thrown away. Of course, the dealer will take no risk if he has a very good hand, but even if he passes with a moderately good one there is the risk of the other players passing.

But the real disadvantage of passing with a good hand is that the dealer's pass is discouraging to the third player, who will not bid unless he has pronounced strength. Instead of silencing his partner by a bid, the dealer really silences him by passing. Even if he is aware of the dealer's tactics, he can never be certain whether he should pass or make a venturesome bid. He may just be bidding at the wrong time. The difficulty could only be got over if there is an understanding that the partner must keep the bidding open when the dealer passes, but that would more often than not be disastrous.

SOME WAITING HANDS DISCUSSED.

Should the dealer pass with any of these hands instead of declaring a no-trump?

Royals	...	King	Knave	7	
Hearts	...	King	Knave	8	
Diamonds	...	Knave	10	4	2
Clubs	...	King	3	2	
Royals	...	Queen	Knave	9	2
Hearts	..	King	10	8	
Diamonds	...	King	Knave	6	
Clubs	...	King	10	7	

The chances of the third player making any declaration are remote. The most the dealer can expect is a suit bid from one of the opponents, and

if this is the kind of information he is looking for what is he going to do with it when he gets it? Assuming the second player declares one heart, what is the dealer going to do when the bidding comes round to him? If he declares one no-trump, the second player will know he stops the heart suit, and he will not go to "two hearts," *as he may have done if the opening bid had been a no-trump*. By postponing his declaration the dealer gains nothing, and he may lose the chance of a profitable double.

There is something to be said for the convention of passing the declaration when the dealer has a solid suit of *clubs*, six or more to the ace, king, and queen, and nothing else of value in the hand—when he hopes for an adverse no-trump declaration, and he is likely to frustrate his object by announcing strength in clubs. This is a tempting hand with which to lie low for an adverse no-trump, but the chances in favour of the no-trumper being declared are small, and against a suit bid the hand has little value as the club suit is likely to be the declarer's short suit.

This conventional pass with clubs sets up a distinction between the two minor suits, but the only real advantage diamonds possess over clubs is in the bidding against no-trumps and royals.

A system that affords the most information to the third player, that enables him to know whether or not the dealer's opening bid is a strong call to be supported or whether it is merely an *informa-*tory call to allow a better declaration to be made by the third player, possesses many advantages over any system of waiting.

DECLARATIONS BY THE SECOND PLAYER.

THE second player enjoys the advantage of having heard from one of his opponents, but this advantage depends on whether the dealer has

- i. passed the declaration,
- ii. made an informatory bid,
- iii. made an attacking bid, or
- iv. called a nullo.

When the dealer passes, all the advantages of the attack are passed on to the second player, and any declaration at the score of love recommended as an opening bid is open to the second player.

PASSING. THE DEALER'S PASS.

There is no obligation on the second player to speak. His bid is entirely voluntary when the dealer passes, but the opportunity to make a forward move should not be missed. Passing the dealer's pass is not good Auction, unless the dealer is known to be partial to the "waiting game." The idea of passing as second player is derived from the old tactics of passing a spade, when it was practically certain that the second player would have another opportunity to speak. If the "safety spade" was left in, there was always a chance of

scoring 100 penalty points; and even when the second player had a game-winning call open to him it was regarded as reckless prodigality to throw away 100 on the off chance of game. There is no compulsory call now, and the second player in passing the dealer's pass may be losing his only opportunity to speak.

It requires great judgment and a knowledge of the players to decide when the second player should pass with a good hand to hear what the third player and his partner have to say. He must be reasonably sure when he passes that he will be given another opportunity to bid.

NO-TRUMP WHEN THE DEALER HAS PASSED.

The second player is in an excellent position to declare a no-trump, which he may call every whit as light as the dealer, because *ex hypothesi* the hand to his right will not have many opportunities of playing through him. Moreover, the dealer having announced weakness, his partner may be credited with something more than average strength.

No-trump is the second player's best line of attack because it forces the third player to pass, or to assume a two-trick contract with the knowledge that he has little support to expect from the dealer.

SUIT BIDS WHEN THE DEALER HAS PASSED.

When the dealer has passed, the second player may name a suit, or declare a nullo, on all hands on which it would be sound to declare as dealer.

He will naturally bid conservatively if he suspects the dealer of playing a waiting game; in any case he should not ask his partner to support his bid unless it is a sound one

All the arguments that have been advanced in favour of the dealer's shut out bid apply with at least equal force to the second player when the dealer has passed—especially when the rubber game is being played. With good royals and pronounced weakness in hearts, or *vice versâ*, a pre-emptive bid is often useful in shutting out an adverse bid, as the third player, in view of the dealer's declared weakness, is unlikely to open with a high bid. But it must be quite clear to the second player that it is not to his advantage to allow the opponents to get into conversation.

When the dealer passes, the second player is also in a good position to declare nullos, as the fact of the pass indicates that the dealer's hand is not good for nullos, and it makes it all the safer for the second player to declare them.

VOLUNTARY BIDS AND FORCED BIDS.

Declarations by the second player may be separated into two main classes: voluntary and forced declarations. A voluntary or free declaration is one that is entirely at the option of the second player; he is under no obligation to bid, he may pass or call as high or as low as he pleases. A "forced" declaration is one in which the bidder has been deprived of this option. He is "forced"

to make a bid above the dealer or to remain silent.

So far the second player's voluntary declarations have only been considered when the dealer has passed.

When the dealer has made an attacking declaration the second player has to decide whether he will pass or he will overcall the dealer. This is the time when he has often to make a *forced* declaration as it may be his only opportunity to speak.

TWO GOLDEN RULES.

There are two golden rules for the second player, when the dealer has made an attacking declaration. Firstly, he should remember that he cannot successfully force the pace with a poor hand, and, secondly, he should say nothing if the dealer's bid suits his hand. These two rules apply to all the players, but they are applicable in the first place to the second player. It is safe to say that most of the points lost at Royal Auction are the result of disregarding these two rules.

When the second player has a hand that appears to justify a bid, it is so difficult for him to refrain from speaking.

DOUBTFUL OVERBIDS.

The second player should never make a doubtful overbid if the game is safe; he should only make a declaration when he sees a reasonable hope of

winning the game. He should catechise himself thus :

“ Is the game safe ? If so, I should not bid.”

“ Can I win the game ? If so, I should bid.”

When the dealer's bid does not suit the second player, he has to stretch a point in overbidding. This is when he has to make a forced bid, and it requires great judgment not to overstretch the bid.

He has yet to hear from his partner, who might be able to raise the bid and perhaps go game, whereas, if he remains silent, an opportunity might be missed of scoring on the deal.

It is so difficult to know when the second player is merely forcing the pace, and when he is making a call from real strength, and wishes his partner to support the bid. When the second player sometimes plays one game and sometimes the other it handicaps the fourth player's bid.

WHEN THE DEALER HAS CALLED “ONE NO- TRUMP

When the dealer has declared “one no-trump” the second player will be greatly embarrassed if he also holds a hand good enough for no-trump. It is inadvisable for the second player to overcall with “two no-trumps” unless he has a standard no-trumper, fully protected in three suits, counting at least 21, and he should only make this bid when a suit bid is not open to him. Although he plays after the dealer, he may not have many opportunities of playing from the exposed hand through the dealer. He may have to lead away from his strong

hand, which would place him at a great disadvantage. It is usually best for the second player not to bid, as he stands to gain more than he stands to lose by lying low.

There is naturally a strong temptation to lead the dealer on to "two no-trumps" by making a suit bid of two, but it should be a playable bid, because the dealer or his partner will only increase the contract if there is a reasonable expectation of game, otherwise they may double the two bid.

SUIT BIDS OVER DEALER'S NO-TRUMP.

In overcalling the dealer's no-trump with a suit declaration, the second player must remember that he is undertaking to make eight tricks against the dealer's declared strength.

The tendency of the second player to make a light overcall is a mistake. Some players go so far as to call "two" as second player in a suit in which they would not call "one" as dealer. They will risk a call of "two" when it requires four tricks in the partner's hand to pull them through. The excuse is, that this is the only opportunity to bid, as the fourth player is unlikely to take up the bidding when the second player passes. This is true, and when there is something useful to communicate to the fourth player the second player has to make a *forced* call.

But the forced call should not be made simply to push the dealer. A light overcall rarely succeeds in forcing the dealer, and if he has reason to

suspect the second player's weakness he has the simple expedient of doubling open to him.

A good general rule is, for the second player not to overcall the dealer's "one no-trump" with a suit bid of "two" unless his hand contains five tricks. But it is difficult to lay down a general rule, because the personal element has to be considered. If the dealer is a forward bidder, and the fourth player is known to be over cautious, it quite alters the position, and the second player might be missing a golden opportunity to bid.

**OVERCALLING DEALER'S "ONE NO-TRUMP" WITH
TWO ROYALS OR "TWO HEARTS"**

Royals	...	Ace	Queen	Knave	9	5
Hearts	...	Knave	6	2		
Diamonds	...	King	Knave	10	4	
Clubs	...	4				

Royals	...	King	Queen	Knave	8	6
Hearts	...	Ace	9	3		
Diamonds	...	Knave	8	2		
Clubs	...	10	4			

Royals	...	Ace	Knave	10	8	7	5
Hearts	...	King	3				
Diamonds	...	Queen	7	5			
Clubs	...	7	4				

Royals	...	4					
Hearts	...	Ace	Queen	Knave	10	5	2
Diamonds	...	9	5	3			
Clubs	...	King	9	8			

Royals	...	King	4	3			
Hearts	...	King	Queen	Knave	9	3	
Diamonds	...	9	4				
Clubs	...	Queen	Knave	8			
Royals	...	9	6				
Hearts	...	Ace	Queen	10	4	3	2
Diamonds	...	Ace	5				
Clubs	...	10	9	5			

LIGHT OVERBIDS IN A SUIT.

It is always better for the second player to err on the side of caution in overcalling the dealer's no-trump, especially when he is tempted to overcall the dealer in a minor suit. The dealer's no-trump may be due to strength in a minor suit which he has not declared, as eleven tricks are required for game, and the second player might come up against the dealer's strength in making a light overbid.

It should be remembered that a doubtful overbid in a minor suit accomplishes little, and risks a great deal. The second player cannot hope to make the game, and it is not very helpful to be left in with a contract requiring eleven tricks for game. He has not even the excuse of wishing to direct his partner's lead. It tells the dealer the suit that is likely to be opened, and it may suggest a shift to a major suit contract.

There would be less losses at Royal Auction if it were made a rule that an overbid in a minor suit should only be made when the second player does

not fear a double, and when he holds the game safe in the major suits. The fourth player would then know exactly how far to raise the bid, and it renders concerted action possible.

The informatory bid is the pitfall of the poor player. He imagines it his duty to communicate his holding to the partner, and he makes a foolish bid when he ought to be silent, and play to defeat the contract.

It is hardly necessary to caution the second player against overcalling with a solid suit of diamonds or clubs to five or more, as that is just the time to give the dealer a Scarborough warning. The stratagem known as the "shift" is often attempted with hands of this type, but, like all traps in the bidding, it is rarely successful.

OVERCALLING DEALER'S "ONE NO-TRUMP" WITH
"TWO DIAMONDS" OR "TWO CLUBS."

Royals	...	King	3				
Hearts	...	Knave	10	9	4		
Diamonds	...	Ace	Queen	7	6	5	4
Clubs	...	6					

Royals	...	Ace	5				
Hearts	...	10	9	8	4		
Diamonds	...	King	Knave	10	8	5	3
Clubs	...	Knave					

Royals	...	King	Queen				
Hearts	...	Queen	5	4			
Diamonds	...	Ace	Knave	10	8	7	5
Clubs	...	4	3				

DECLARATIONS BY THE SECOND PLAYER. 91

Royals	9	8	6	2		
Hearts	Ace	4				
Diamonds	King	3				
Clubs	Ace	Queen	10	9	5	

Royals	... Queen	5	4			
Hearts	... King	9				
Diamonds	... 6	2				
Clubs	... King	Queen	10	9	7	6

Royals	... Knave	9	5			
Hearts	... Queen	10	3			
Diamonds	... 9					
Clubs	... Ace	Queen	Knave	10	6	2

OVERCALLING THE DEALER'S "ONE NO-TRUMP" WITH "TWO NULLOS"

When the second player has a good nullo hand he should not miss the opportunity of overcalling the dealer's "one no-trump" with "two nullos." Nullos are great at forcing an adverse no-trump, and, if the partner can support the bid, the opponents can be forced to declare beyond the limits of safety or to relinquish the declaration. As I have pointed out before, rather than make the nullo bidder a present of several tricks, which they find they cannot help taking, the opponents will risk a high contract—which they may not be able to fulfil. It is the opportunity of the little cards, and the opportunity should not be missed. If the

opponents have high sequences, and, especially when one hand has four aces, the bidding is sure to be brisk.

Royals	Queen	Knave	4	3	2
Hearts	7				
Diamonds	Ace	5	4	2	
Clubs	9	3			

Royals	6				
Hearts	Ace	9	8	4	3
Diamonds	Ace	5	3		
Clubs	Knave	7		2	

Royals	Ace	6		4	2
Hearts	King	3			
Diamonds	9	4	3		
Clubs	Knave	5	2		

Royals	Ace	3			
Hearts	King	4	2		
Diamonds	Queen	Knave	6	4	2
Clubs	6	5	2		

Royals	7				
Hearts	9				
Diamonds	Ace	10	9	5	2
Clubs	King	5	4	3	

Royals	7	3			
Hearts	Queen	4			
Diamonds	10	9	5	4	2
Clubs	Ace	Knave	4	2	

OVERCALLING THE DEALER'S SUIT BIDS.

The second player should not hesitate to call a royal over a heart on any hand on which he would declare royals as dealer. Even when he has to make a bid of two over a bid of one he will stretch a point rather than forego bidding. It is very likely that if he remain silent he will not have another opportunity to speak, and his silence will certainly handicap the fourth player in bidding. The bidding, so far as suit bids are concerned, does not offer any great difficulty. The second player should welcome any opportunity to bid when he has the material for bidding.

When it is a question of calling a no-trump after a suit declaration by the dealer, it is necessary, in the first place, that the declared suit should be stopped, and in the second place that the hand should count up to 21, or more, with at least two other suits protected. Conservatism is necessary in declaring a no-trump over a suit declaration.

Some players will not hesitate to declare a no-trump over the dealer's suit bid, with all-round strength counting up to 21, *without protection in the declared suit*. They trust that the partner holds protection in the lacking suit, and as it is a one-trick contract there is every likelihood of fulfilling it. But it handicaps the fourth player in deciding to raise the bid, if it is overcalled. The safer rule, not to declare no-trump unless a stopper is held in the declared suit, makes for better bidding, as it allows concerted action between the partners.

OVER-CALLING DEALER'S SUIT DECLARATION
WITH "ONE NO-TRUMP" HOLDING A GUARD
IN THE DECLARED SUIT.

Royals	... Ace	3	2	=	7	
Hearts	... 10	9	2			
Diamonds	... Ace	Queen	6	4	=	10
Clubs	... King	10	7	=	6	
					—	23
Royals	... King	5	2	=	5	
Hearts	... Knave	5	4			
Diamonds	... Queen	Knave	3	=	5	
Clubs	... Ace	King	9	5	=	12
					—	22
Royals	... Queen	Knave	8	=	5	
Hearts	... Ace	6	5	=	7	
Diamonds	... King	Knave	9	=	7	
Clubs	... Queen	10	9	7	=	4
					—	23
Royals	... Queen	5	4	=	3	
Hearts	... King	Knave	3	=	7	
Diamonds	... Queen	10	7	=	4	
Clubs	... Ace	6	5	4	=	7
					—	21
Royals	... King	6	4	=	5	
Hearts	... Ace	Queen	3	=	10	
Diamonds	... Queen	9	7	=	3	
Clubs	... Queen	10	7	3	=	4
					—	22
Royals	... Knave	10	7	2	=	3
Hearts	... King	9	7	=	5	
Diamonds	... King	7	6	=	5	
Clubs	... Ace	10	5	=	8	
					—	21

DECLARATIONS BY THE THIRD PLAYER.

THE third player's declaration is dependent, in the first instance, on the dealer's declaration. If the dealer has made a game-winning declaration it is the third player's duty to support the bid when he can.

If the dealer has passed, and the second player has made a bid, the third player's declaration will depend on the strength of his hand. He will have no great difficulty in arriving at a decision. But if the second player has also passed, the third player has to bid conservatively, unless he knows the dealer plays a waiting game.

WHEN THE DEALER HAS PASSED.

When the dealer has passed, and the second player has passed, the third player has to be careful about declaring no-trump, as he has no indication of support. He must credit the dealer with less than an average holding, and, before he can call no-trump, he needs a standard no-trumper, counting up to 24, with three suits protected. An average hand, counting up to 18, and protected in three suits, is good enough in opening the bidding, but it is not good enough when the dealer has passed.

There is an increased probability that the fourth player is strong, and a light no-trumper, with a strong hand playing after the third player, is apt to break down badly.

This conservatism is not so necessary in the case of a trump declaration. Any suit bid open to the dealer is equally open to the third player, because the dealer may have considerable support in the suit, without sufficient strength to declare.

When the dealer has passed and the second player has passed there is every likelihood of the fourth player calling a no-trump. This is a position, in which the third player has to carefully consider the advisability of suggesting a lead from his partner by making a suit bid. No fair opportunity of making an informatory bid should be missed by the third player in anticipation of a no-trump bid by the fourth player. If the dealer is unable to raise the bid, it will at least direct his lead.

SECONDARY PRE-EMPTIVE BIDS.

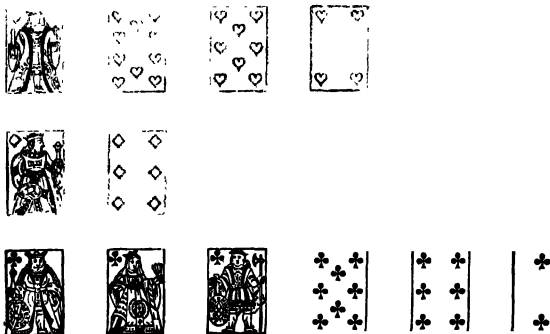
When the dealer has made an attacking bid, and the third player sees that it offers a good prospect of game, it is sometimes advisable for him to raise the dealer's bid, even when no bid has been made by the second player. The idea is to prevent the opponents from getting into conversation, and at the same time to inform the dealer that the game is in sight; and it is more profitable to play for game, than to angle for penalties.

A *secondary* pre-emptive bid is, therefore, an overbid made by the third player in a suit originally

declared by the dealer, when the third player has *material support* in the declared suit with *pronounced weakness* in a major suit. He forces on the dealer a heavier contract, in order to shut out a bid by the fourth player.

These bids at times prove very effective in shutting out a bid from the fourth player. With great strength in the dealer's declared suit, and with pronounced weakness in a major suit, overcalling the partner with a bid of two or three seems the best for the partnership, but the third player has to consider whether it is better to encourage, or to discourage adverse bidding. He should only make a pre-emptive bid when adverse bidding is to be discouraged.

There is a similarity between all bids of this nature. Here is a typical instance:—



The dealer having declared a heart, which the second player has passed, the third hand should, with this holding, raise the bid to "three hearts," to shut out a bid from the fourth player.

OVERCALLING THE PARTNER'S BID.

When the dealer has made an informatory bid in a minor suit and the second player has passed, the third player's bid is fairly obvious. Any attacking bid he would have made as dealer he should make as third player aided by the information he has received from the dealer.

But one of the most difficult problems that confronts the third player is to know when he should overcall the dealer's attacking bid when the second player has passed.

There are two widely different situations that arise, and as one or other of them occurs almost in every rubber, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between them. In order to make the distinction as marked as possible the overcall has been divided into—

- i. the aggressive overcall or "*take out*" with pronounced strength,
- ii. the protective overcall or "*take out*" with pronounced weakness.

In the first case the third player has, or is assumed to have, a more paying declaration available, and with pronounced strength he deliberately overcalls his partner in order to make a better score; in the second case, he has no hope of

scoring in the deal, and, with pronounced weakness, he overcalls his partner in order to minimise the anticipated loss.

In many cases, both the assumptions prove to be incorrect, and when this is so it does not invariably conduce to polite language.

If it were always possible for the dealer to know when the "take-out" is aggressive and when it is protective, overcalling would be a comparatively simple matter, and no great harm would result; but it is the indefiniteness of the "take-out" that makes it so trying, and renders it so productive of misunderstandings.

OVERCALLING THE DEALER'S ATTACKING BID.

It should be remembered that some players have an overweening fondness for playing the hands; and, with a partner of this type, overcalling is apt to be disastrous, and to result in mutual recriminations.

In many cases, however, the overcall is to the manifest advantage of the partnership, and it has then to play an important part in the scheme of bidding. If a few simple rules are followed there should be no misunderstanding.

In the first place, the partner's attacking bid should not be interfered with unless there is complete justification for doing so.

In the next place, the overcall of a no-trump or a major suit declaration should only be made with *pronounced strength*, or with *pronounced weakness*.

And the general rule is, that overcalling in a

major suit is an aggressive overcall, made with the deliberate intention of increasing the chances of making the game in the deal, while overcalling in a minor suit is a protective measure, with the object of incurring the least possible loss on the deal.

This general rule should, in the opinion of many players, be made an invariable rule, otherwise the overbid in a major suit may mean one of two totally different things, it may mean that the third player has a game-winning hand, and it may mean that he has *carte blanche*.

AGGRESSIVE OVERCALLS

Overcalling the dealer's attacking bid of no-trump, or a major suit, need only be considered, as there will naturally be no hesitation in overcalling the dealer's bid in a minor suit in order to increase the chances of making the game.

All hands on which the third player could make an original declaration of two in a major suit, and on which he would have selected the major suit in preference to no-trump, are good enough for an overbid—but the hand must on its own merits be good enough for six tricks.

Increasing the contract to eight tricks has no real importance when a game-winning declaration has been made. It is accepting a small risk to save a big one later (that is, the risk of being forced to assume a heavier contract later in the bidding), and it gives the partner information that may be useful to him in the subsequent bidding.

DECLARATIONS BY THE THIRD PLAYER. 101

For much the same reasons, the third player may overcall the dealer's bid of a heart with a royal, or the bid of a royal with two hearts. But there must be no bidding at cross purposes. It must be quite clear to the third hand that his suit offers a better chance of game—that is to say, that his hand is worth six tricks in his own suit, *and that he is blank, or nearly so, in the dealer's suit.*

The idea in overcalling a major suit is, that, while the third player has no help in the dealer's suit, the dealer may have help in the third player's suit. Otherwise there is no justification for interfering with the partner's bid.

TWO ROYALS OR HEARTS OVER DEALER'S NO-TRUMP.

Royals	... King	Queen	Knave	10	5
Hearts	... 8				
Diamonds...	King	9	3		
Clubs	... Ace	Knave	6	3	

Royals	... 9	7			
Hearts	... Ace	Queen	10	7	2
Diamonds...	King	Queen	10	4	3
Clubs	... 4				

Royals	... Queen	Knave	10	9	8	2
Hearts	... King	Queen	3			
Diamonds...	7	5				
Clubs	... King	6				

NO-TRUMP OVER DEALER'S ONE ROYAL OR HEART.
OVER "ONE ROYAL."

Royals	...	3				
Hearts	...	Ace	5	3		
Diamonds...	Ace	Knave	10	9		
Clubs	...	King	Queen	10	5	4

OVER "ONE HEART."

Royals	...	King	Queen	2		
Hearts	...	7				
Diamonds...	King	Queen	Knave	7	3	
Clubs	...	Ace	Queen	3		

OVER "ONE ROYAL."

Royals	...	3	2			
Hearts	...	Ace	9	3		
Diamonds...	Ace	King	10	2		
Clubs		Ace	Queen	5		

When the third player overcalls the dealer's declaration in a major suit with "one no-trump," he either shows four aces or great strength in all the suits except the one called by the dealer.

PROTECTIVE OVERCALLS.

A "warning bid" is an announcement to the dealer that the assistance he relied upon in undertaking his contract will not be forthcoming.

When the warning bid does not increase the trick-taking value of the two hands, it is a foolish overcall, and doubly foolish when it invites a double from the adversaries.

The "warning bid," if used sparingly, is certainly useful in taking the dealer out of a light no-trump. With six small trumps, and nothing else of value in the hand, the "rescue" is advisable. And the rescue is also advisable when the third player has a perfect nullo hand.

But unless the rescue is imperative, it is always best not to interfere with the dealer's bid. The rescue, however well intentioned it may be, makes two big assumptions. It assumes that the no-trump has been very light, and it assumes that the fourth player will pass the bid, but if the no-trump has been very light there is little danger of its being left in.

The rescue is chiefly advisable with a partner known to declare on flimsy material, and with opponents known to punish light bids, not by doubling, but by remaining silent, and allowing the declarer to meet his doom.

It does not appear to be a sound proposition to make a protective overcall with such a suit as five cards to the queen or knave. But this is generally recommended. The second player having passed, it is likely that the good cards are with the dealer and the fourth player. If the fourth player has a very good hand, it is unlikely that he will leave the dealer with a contract to make only the odd trick.

In these days of light no-trumpers, a contract to make eight tricks with a queen or knave suit to five against a strong fourth hand, is a foolish invitation to the opponents to double. This is the

real risk of overcalling, and there is the further risk of the dealer misinterpreting the overcall, and going to "two no-trumps."

THE DEALER'S ANSWER TO AN OVERCALL.

Every possible precaution should be taken against the dealer misinterpreting the overcall. Is it a warning, or is it an indication of strength? The dealer should regard the overcall in a major suit as an indication of strength, and the overcall in a minor suit as an indication of weakness. In any case, he should be careful about going back to his original bid.

He may decide to do so with a strong hand if the overcall is in a major suit, but if it is in a minor suit he would do well to leave it alone, unless he has a phenomenal hand on which the game is a fair certainty.

SUPPORTING THE DEALER'S DECLARATION.

The general rule is, that the third player should support the dealer's declarations. As the extent of the support will depend on the strength of the hand, successful combination in the bidding is mainly dependent on a proper estimation of the assisting value of a hand. This assisting value is affected by a variety of causes, which are entirely different when playing (i) no-trumps, (ii) a suit declaration and (iii) nullos.

When the dealer has made a bid of one in no-trump, or in a major suit, he should only be credited with the minimum strength necessary for an

original declaration—that is, the minimum of 18 for a no-trump declaration and the minimum of four tricks for a suit declaration. It is important to bear this in mind in raising the bid in order that the declarer should not be carried beyond his depth.

RAISING THE PARTNER'S NO-TRUMP DECLARATION.

When the declarer's no-trump has been overcalled, *it is necessary for the third player to have a guard in the declared suit to raise the dealer's bid.* But while protection in the suit declared by the second player is essential, something more is necessary in these days of light no-trumpers. In addition to the stopper, a minimum of three probable tricks, or 18 points, is required to raise the bid *once*. Although a sound no-trump is the best opening declaration, it is, nullos excepted, the most dangerous to raise. Raising on insufficient material might easily lead to the loss of three or four hundred points.

There is no obligation on the third player to raise the partner's bid when he stops the adverse suit. This is just the time a profitable double may be in sight, and if he has fair strength in the suit declared by the second player, his best course is to double instead of raising the bid, and leave the dealer to decide whether it is better to play for game or for penalty score.

If lacking in a guard in the declared suit, the third player should, when he can, indicate his suit

to the dealer, as this is the best way to assist the dealer to raise his own bid.

RAISING THE DEALER'S SUIT BID.

In making a suit declaration, the dealer relies on at least one sure trick from his partner, and, therefore, the third player should not raise the bid unless he has something more than this minimum support to offer the dealer. The third player should only take into account the extra trick or tricks the dealer has not, *ex hypothesi*, reckoned upon in making the declaration—otherwise, the same tricks would be calculated twice over, and the increase in contract would be unsound.

The kind of assistance the declarer looks for from dummy is trump strength, side aces and kings, and blank suits or Singletons so as to ruff adverse aces and kings. It would be unsound to raise the bid on length in trumps only, or on a single side suit such as ace king queen, with pronounced weakness in trumps.

Speaking generally the third player should not raise his partner's suit bid, unless he holds at least two little trumps, besides two sure tricks. He may raise the bid once for each additional trick or "raiser" in his hand. The idea of not raising the bid without a minimum of two trumps is to ensure a majority of trumps in favour of the declarer.

THE DEALER HAVING DECLARED ROYALS.

Raise Once.

Royals	...	10	8	6	=	0
Hearts	...	Ace	4	2	=	1
Diamonds	...	Knave	9	4	3	= 0
Clubs	...	King	Queen	3	=	1
						— 2

Raise Twice.

Royals	...	King	8	6	=	1
Hearts	...	King	Queen	3	=	1
Diamonds	...	Ace	7	4	=	1
Clubs	...	Queen	5	4	3	= 0
						— 3

Raise Three Times.

Royals	...	10	8	5	2	=	0
Hearts	...					=	2
Diamonds	...	Ace	King	7	6	=	2
Clubs	...	Queen	7	6	5	4	= 0
							— 4

Raise Four Times.

Royals	...	King	8	6	5	=	1
Hearts	...	Ace				=	2
Diamonds	...	Ace	King	7	6	4	= 2
Clubs	...	Knave	6	4		=	0
							— 5

HOW TO RECKON "TRICKS" AND "RAISERS."

A useful method of estimating the assisting value of a hand is to calculate "raisers" separately from "tricks." For, while every trick is a raiser every raiser is not necessarily a trick.

Strictly speaking, "tricks" are the aces and kings of the trump suit and the side suits—but the kings must be fully protected. Tricks are certainties, raisers are often uncertainties.

Single raisers. (i.) The queen and one or two others in the trump suit is a raiser, (ii.) a Singleton with two or three little trumps is a raiser, (iii.) a king queen in a side suit is a raiser, but a guarded king without the queen is a doubtful raiser unless it is to the left of a player who has bid in the suit, (iv.) a queen of a side suit even when fully guarded is a very doubtful raiser, and should only be counted when the situation is desperate.

Double raisers. (i.) A blank suit with two or three little trumps may be counted as two raisers, (ii.) a Singleton ace of a side suit with two or three little trumps may be counted as two raisers, and (iii.) if a point has to be stretched, four trumps headed by the ace or king may be counted as a double raiser. It is generally right to stretch a point when a player holds the ace of a suit declared by his partner; it is always well to announce it, as the declarer will have no difficulty in extracting trumps.

ESTIMATING THE ASSISTING VALUE OF A HAND THE PARTNER HAVING DECLARED ROYALS.

Royals	...	6	5	4	3	= 0	This hand can support the declaration to the extent of <i>two tricks</i> : the third player may raise the bid <i>once</i> .
Hearts	...	8				= 1	
Diamonds	...	7	6	5	4	= 0	
Clubs	...	Ace	6	5	4	= 1	

DECLARATIONS BY THE THIRD PLAYER. 109

Royals	...	6	5	4	3 = 0	The additional king of clubs makes an <i>extra</i> trick: the third player may raise the bid <i>twice</i> .
Hearts	...	8			= 1	
Diamonds...	7	6	5	4 = 0		
Clubs	...	Ace	King	5	4 = 2	

Royals	...	6	5	4	3 = 0	The ace of hearts Singleton may be counted as <i>two</i> tricks: the third player may raise the bid <i>three</i> times.
Hearts	...	Ace			2	
Diamonds...	7	6	5	4 = 0		
Clubs	...	Ace	King	5	4 = 2	

Royals	...	Ace	5	4	3 = 1	The additional ace of trumps makes the hand good enough for five tricks: the third player may raise the bid <i>four</i> times.
Hearts	...	Ace			2	
Diamonds...	7	6	5	4 = 0		
Clubs	...	Ace	King	5	4 = 2	

Royals	...	Ace	5	4	3 = 1	The hand is now good enough for six tricks: the third player may raise the bid <i>five</i> times.
Hearts	...	Ace				
Diamonds...	Ace	6	5	4		
Clubs	...	Ace	King	5	4	

The gradual increase in the assisting value of the hand from two to six tricks should be noted.

CONTINUATION OF THE BIDDING.

CONVERSATION at the card table is as a rule a great deal overdone. It is the bidder who seldom bids and the doubler who seldom doubles that makes the most reliable and desirable partner. As Sydney Smith would say "those flashes of silence" make his conversation the more perfectly delightful.

The golden rule for declaring is that with a hand holding out game possibilities a player should assume the attack, otherwise he should be on the defensive.

And the golden rule for the continuation of the bidding is that a player should take any reasonable chance to make the game or to keep the other side from making the game, but he should refrain from taking any chances if the game cannot be made either by his side or by the adversaries.

These are the central ideas round which the entire scheme of bidding revolves.

THE PERSONAL ELEMENT.

The personal element plays an important part in the fourth player's declaration, and in the continuation of the bidding. An intimate knowledge of the players must therefore largely supplement the conventions of declaring. There is the overcautious man who will never take chances, and the man who

always bids his hand to the full limit; while some men are so fond of defeat that they will go halfway to meet it. A great deal must be left to personal judgment of the situation and the players. While the over-timid partner misses many good bargains at the auction, the overzealous partner is apt to be heavily penalised. One must be timorous with the rash and adventurous with the timid.

DECLARATIONS BY THE FOURTH PLAYER.

Most of what has been said regarding the third player's declarations apply to the fourth player. He must treat the second player's declaration much in the same way as the third player treats the dealer's declaration, with this important difference, that he has to carefully distinguish between the second player's free and forced declaration, both in bidding and in supporting his partner's bid. The fourth player needs a minimum of three tricks to raise the second player's forced call, *e.g.*; dealer calls "one no-trump," second player "two royals," third player "two no-trumps," the fourth player should have at least three tricks to raise his partner's bid. This illustrates the rule that a player should never undertake a losing contract when he has no chance of making the game. If the third player's "two no-trumps" was a sound contract, the chances of making game in the suit are remote and it is better for the adversaries to play to defeat the contract.

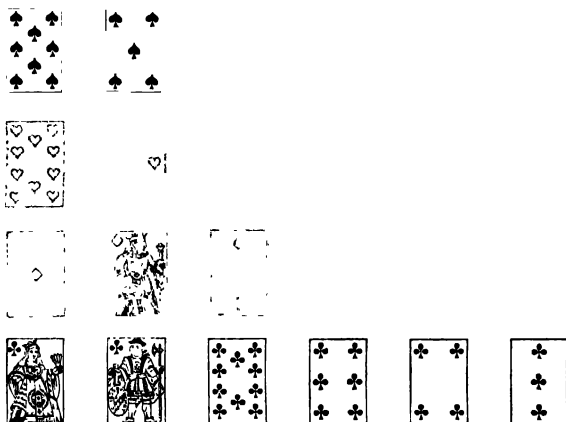
There are a few situations that are peculiar to the fourth player in the first round of the bidding.

He has often to take a long chance in order to direct his partner's lead when the dealer has called a no-trump and the second player has passed. The fourth player has then to declare "two" in a suit on a hand on which eight tricks would be exceedingly difficult to obtain, not with the object of pushing the dealer but in order to *direct his partner's lead*. If the lead from the partner offers a reasonable chance of saving the game, the over-call is warranted, otherwise it is a losing game, because the dealer, instead of increasing his contract might play to defeat the bid.



"Two diamonds" should be declared, as the lead will enable the suit to be established before parting with an important re-entry, the ace of spades.

In the hand that follows two clubs should be declared, as the lead of a club would help establish the clubs with the aid of the two re-entries in diamonds :—



Here are two borderline hands on which the overcall might be made :—

I. Royals	...	6	5			
Hearts	.	Ace	5	4		
Diamonds	..	8	7	6		
Clubs	...	Ace	Knave	10	9	4
II. Royals	...	Queen	Knave	2		
Hearts	...	7	6	5		
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	Knave	9	5
Clubs	...	6	3			

The overcall is not made with the object of scoring, but solely in order to direct the partner's lead.

IMPORTANCE OF THE MAJOR SUIT CONTRACTS.

About 40 per cent. of the dealer's opening declarations are no-trumps, 22 per cent. are royals, and nearly 20 per cent. are hearts; leaving only 18 per cent. for the informatory bids, for nullos, and for passing the declaration. It is, indeed, largely a game of no-trumps, royals, and hearts, as anyone of these game-winning declarations swamp all the other declarations put together. Under the royal count there is no slow process of arriving at the final bid, no gradual building up the bids so as to arrive at the most paying declaration. These were methods possible under the old count, when all the bidding centered round the no-trumper, and a player would bid a diamond to show top honours, with only three cards in the suit, and little or nothing else in the hand.

It by no means follows that 40 per cent. of the hands are *played* at no-trump, because the opening bid of a no-trump is frequently revised in favour of one of the suit calls, especially royals and hearts. While more hands are called than played at no-trumps, the reverse is true of royals and hearts, as 50 per cent. of the hands are played at these two calls. Royal Auction is, therefore, 50 per cent. a game of the major suit contracts. This fact has an important bearing on all questions of declaration.

A basic principle of the game is to support a bid made by the partner in a major suit, and not to interfere with it unless there are special reasons for doing so.

**OVERCALLING THE PARTNER'S SUIT
DECLARATION.**

When a player is void in his partner's suit it constitutes a special reason for interfering with his bid, because it is likely one of the opponents has length in the suit. With a good suit of his own overcalling would be right not only as a warning to the partner, but because the other suit may not be similarly distributed, and the partner might hold two or three little trumps which would turn the balance of trump strength in favour of the revised declaration.

It was pointed out not long ago in the card columns of the *Field*, that there is no part of the declaration where there are greater varieties of practice than in the case of overcalling one's partner, and it is at the same time the most fruitful source from which spring angry contentions.

Taking the case of the partners bidding one suit against another, and assuming that the adversaries are taking no part in the proceedings, the writer points out that each time a player returns to his own suit, he indicates a very much greater strength. "The question may be looked on as an illustration of the principle that one should not count anything in one's hand twice over. If one has made a declaration which gives a certain information, that information is taken into account by all the other players who have made declarations. A declaration subsequently made, say, by one's partner embodies that information together with what one's partner

sees in his own hand. If that declaration is to be superseded, it must be on account of some new facts not already disclosed. A player should always give his partner credit for making the best decision according to the knowledge which is open to him, and his only justification for upsetting that decision is that there is something in his own hand which his partner would not suspect."

HOW TO SECURE A MAJORITY OF TRUMPS.

The proposition the writer puts forward, with which every player will agree, is that the "trick-making efficiency of the two hands combined is the greater when that suit is declared in which the two players between them hold the greater number of trumps. For not only have the players a better chance of having many long trumps after the adverse trumps are out, but also length in trumps argues shortness in plain suits, and the players have the better chance of ruffing before trumps have been drawn. Likewise, of course, the adversaries are short in trumps and have a poorer chance of making their trumps by ruffing and of having enough trumps to thwart the declarer's plans."

In order to secure the largest number of trumps in the combined hands a player should not overcall his partner's declaration, *in a suit of equal game-winning value, unless he holds four trumps more in his own suit than in his partner's suit.*

In order to overcall a heart with a royal (and *vice versâ*) or a club with a diamond (and *vice versâ*), the hand should contain four more spades than hearts or four more diamonds than clubs, *e.g.*, to overcall a heart with a royal the overbidder should have five spades and one heart or six spades and two hearts—that is, four more spades than hearts.

In each case there must be no doubt about the declarer's ability to fulfil the contract, especially if the bid increases the commitment.

GIVING PARTNER THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

The declaration should ordinarily cease on the second round; if it does not, it should indicate greater strength than was shown in the first round. The continuation of the declaration to the third round is of a totally different character to the first two rounds, and would only be right if a freak hand is held, and there is no doubt whatever about the wisdom of the further overcall. If there is the least doubt, the benefit of the doubt must be given to the partner.

With partners bidding in harmony and with the common object of arriving at the declaration that would be the most productive, that is to say, the declaration in which (other things being equal) the partners have the most and the opponents the fewest trumps, there should be no

misunderstanding in arriving at the most paying bid of which the two hands are capable.

ESTIMATING THE DECLARING VALUE OF A HAND.

It is important that a player should correctly estimate the declaring value of his hand to enable him to combine his hand with his partner's, and to go, if necessary, to the limit of safe bidding without overstepping the safety line.

In a suit declaration, he should count his tricks in the trump suit according to the length as well as the strength of the suit :

Ace	King	Queen	4	3	2	=	6 tricks
Ace	King	5	4	3	2	=	5 tricks
Ace	King	5	4	3		=	3 tricks and a probable fourth.

In the first case three rounds of trumps will probably exhaust the suit and the hand may be counted as good for 6 tricks. In the second case the queen, and in the third case both the queen and the knave should be counted as lost tricks, as they may be held adversely. This method of estimating tricks in the trump suit has already been applied to the table of royal and heart hands that will be found at page 55.

The same method should be employed in estimating tricks in the side suits. Length in a suit headed by top cards is very valuable when it is protected by length in the trump suit.

DECLARING VALUE OF THE TRUMP SUIT.

								Number of tricks.	
								Certain.	Probable.
Ace	King	7	6	5	4	3	6		1
Ace	King	7	6	5	4		5		
Ace	King	7	6	5			4		
Ace	King	Queen	6	5	4		6		
Ace	King	Queen	6	5			5		
Ace	King	Queen	6				3		1
Ace	Queen	7	6	5	4	3	6		
Ace	Queen	7	6	5	4		4		1
Ace	Queen	7	6	5			3		1
Ace	Queen	Knave	6	5	4		5		
Ace	Queen	Knave	6	5			4		
Ace	Knave	10	6	5			3		
King	Queen	Knave	10	6	5		5		
King	Queen	Knave	10	6			4		
King	Queen	Knave	6	5	4		5		
King	Queen	Knave	6	5			4		
King	Queen	10	6	5			3		1
King	Queen	7	6	5	4		4		1
King	Queen	7	6	5			3		1
King	Knave	10	6	5			3		1

TRICK VALUE OF PLAIN SUITS.

This table is supplementary to that given at page 55. The point to which it is desired to draw attention is the decrease in value of the suit as its numerical strength decreases. The same principle should be followed in appraising the trick value of a long plain suit, provided the hand does not contain fewer than five trumps.

This method of calculation assumes that the declaring side have a majority of trumps to aid in the establishment of a plain suit, *e.g.*, with Ace King Queen 6 5 4 3 in the trump suit, and six cards to the 10 in a plain suit, the hand may be counted as good enough for 10 tricks, because after the trumps are drawn three rounds would establish the plain suit.

APPRAISING THE ASSISTING VALUE OF A HAND.

An entirely different method has to be employed in estimating the *assisting value* of a hand. In calculating the *declaring value* of a hand both length and strength of the side-suits are important factors, because control of the trump suit lends valuable support to a long side-suit. Ace King Queen 3 2 of a side-suit may be counted as five tricks; but the same suit can only be counted as two tricks in calculating the *assisting value* of a hand. The reason is obvious, in the one case there is length in trumps that will not only protect the side-suit, but will serve as re-entries to bring it in: in the other case winning cards in the other side-suits are required to serve as re-entries in bringing in the long suit.

Similarly, Singletons and blank suits, that may be counted as tricks in appraising the assisting value of a hand, cannot be reckoned as tricks in appraising the declaring value of a hand, for the simple reason that the full value of the trump suit has already been taken into account, and as the extra trick can only come from the trump suit, it would be a case of calculating the same trick twice over.

In combining the two hands in the bidding there should be a clear idea of what raisers are (*see* page 107) :

Trump suit.

- Ace with or without others.
- King and one other.
- Queen and one or two others.

Plain suits.

- Ace.
- King Queen.
- King Knave 10.

Void and short suits.

- A blank suit with two or three little trumps.
- A Singleton with two or three little trumps.

Five little trumps is not a raiser unless the hand contain a Singleton or a void suit.

A king, unless it is protected with the queen, is not a raiser if the adversary to the left has declared the suit

A suit headed by the queen knave is not a raiser, and finally

A doubleton is not a raiser.

In order that there should be no misunderstanding on these two important points, the declaring as well as the assisting values of the same hands are shown in the statement that follows. The "declaring value" shows the number of tricks the hand is good for with *royals* as trumps, and the "assisting value" shows the number of tricks the hand is good for assuming the partner has declared *hearts*. The point it is desired to bring out very clearly is the difference in the

values of the plain suit when the hand contains length in trumps and when the hand is short in trumps.

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DECLARING AND
ASSISTING VALUES.**

						Declaring value for "ROYALS."	Assisting value for "HEARTS."
Royals	... Ace	Qn.	10	8	6	4	1
Hearts	.. 7	6	5				
Diamonds	Ace	Qn.	Kn.	7		3	1
Clubs	... 7						1
						7 tricks	3 tricks
Royals	... Kg.	Qn.	10	8	6	5	1
Hearts	... 7	6	5				
Diamonds	... Ace					1	2
Clubs	... 10	9	7				
						6 tricks	3 tricks
Royals	... Ace	Kg.	Qn.	5	4	5	2
Hearts	... 7	6	5				
Diamonds	... Kg.	Qn.	Kn.	9	6	4	1
Clubs	...						2
						9 tricks	5 tricks
Royals	... Kg.	Qn.	6	5	4	3	1
Hearts	... 7	6	5				
Diamonds	... Kg.	Qn.	Kn.	10		3	1
Clubs	... 9						1
						6 tricks	3 tricks

*

This statement shows the declaring and the assisting values of the *same hands*. That is, their declaring values with "royals" as trumps and their assisting values if the partner declares "hearts." The object in showing the two values in juxtaposition is to draw attention to the difference in the methods of appraising long side suits, Singletons, and blank suits.

RAISING SUIT DECLARATIONS.

Most hands come to grief owing to unwarranted raising. Raising the partner's suit bid depends on whether—

- i. the partner has raised his own bid,
- ii. the partner has not had the opportunity to raise his bid,
- iii. the partner having had the opportunity, has refused to raise his own bid.

There is a difference between going from "one" to "two" and from "two" to "three." When the declarer raises his own bid he is marked with six tricks at least. He has probably control of the trump suit and tricks in one or more side suits. If the partner's hand has one trick and one raiser it is good enough to raise from "two" to "three."

It is the first increase of contract that has to be carefully considered. When a bidder has not had an opportunity to raise his own bid he should only be credited with the minimum strength necessary to make an original declaration, and the partner

would not be justified in raising the bid unless his hand is good enough for two sure tricks if the suit is made trumps.

When the bidder has been given the opportunity to raise his own bid, but has refused to raise it, it is an indication that his first bid showed the full strength of his hand, and the partner would not be justified in raising the bid unless he has a minimum of two tricks and a raiser.

When the partner has declared two in a suit, it is tantamount to raising his own bid; it shows that his hand is good on its own merits for six tricks. To fulfil his contract of eight tricks he probably relies on one trick from his partner, and on the extra trick likely to accrue to him in playing the two hands. To raise his bid once it is only necessary to hold one trick and a raiser.

COMBINING THE HANDS IN A SUIT DECLARATION.

To recapitulate, the chief points for consideration in combining the two hands in the bidding are:—

- i. Raising the partner's suit bid before he has raised his own bid.

A minimum of two sure tricks is required to raise the bid once; and if it is a forced bid, a minimum of three sure tricks is required to raise the bid once.

- ii. Raising the partner's suit bid after he has raised his own bid.

A minimum of one trick and a raiser will justify raising the bid once.

- iii. Raising one's own suit declaration before the partner has spoken.

The hand should be good enough for six tricks on its own merits to increase the contract from "one" to "two."

- iv. Raising one's own suit declaration after the partner has passed.

When the declaration has been over-called and the partner passes, his refusal to speak may mean that he is pleased with the adverse declaration, or that he has insufficient support to offer his partner. Until more is known about his hand he should be given credit for *only one trick*. The original declarer has to rely on his own hand to fulfil his contract if he decides to increase it.

RAISING A NO-TRUMP DECLARATION.

In raising the declaration of no-trumps against an adverse suit bid the factors that have to be taken into account are :—

- i. whether the no-trump bidder has a guard in the declared suit.
- ii. whether the partner has had an opportunity to speak but has remained silent.

The first one to raise the bid, whether it is the original declarer or his partner, must have a sure guard in the suit. Unless this is made an

invariable rule it is impossible to know how far to advance the no-trump bid.

It should be remembered that an original no-trump bid may be made on a strictly average hand, and the partner should not therefore raise the bid unless, in addition to protection in the adversaries' suit, his hand counts up to a minimum of 18 points, and he needs an additional 10 points for each subsequent raise.

With a partner known to bid a thin no-trump to avoid passing or to keep the opponents from declaring a no-trump, instead of raising on any doubtful hand it is safest to pass the bid and allow the original declarer to make a further announcement.

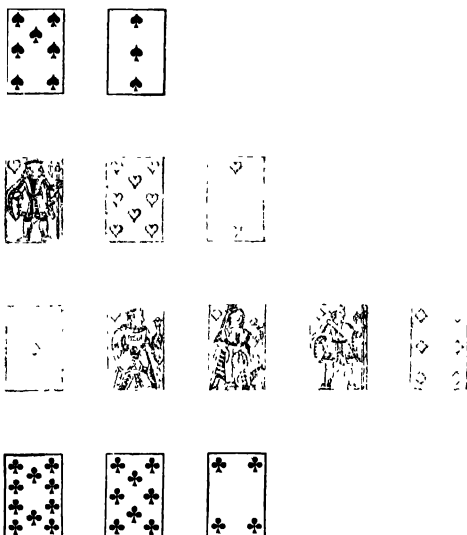
After the declarer of a no-trump has raised his own bid, a minimum of 15 points is sufficient to raise the bid once and an additional 7 points for each subsequent raise.

"DOUBLE BIDDING."

In estimating the assisting value of a hand, whether it is in a suit declaration or at no-trump, the error of what is known as "double" bidding has to be carefully guarded against. It has already been pointed out that "if one has made a declaration that gives a certain information, that information is taken into account by all the other players who have made declarations. A declaration subsequently made embodies that information together with what one's partner sees in his own hand.

If that declaration is to be superseded, it must be on account of some new facts not already disclosed."

If the dealer calls "two diamonds" holding



to second player "two royals," the third player "three hearts," and the fourth player "three royals," it would be incorrect for the dealer to raise the third player's bid, because the information given in the original bid has presumably been taken into account by the third player in making his bid. But the dealer would be quite justified in going to "four

hearts" if instead of a doubleton his hand contained a Singleton spade thus:—



The singleton spade would constitute a new fact not already disclosed, and would, therefore, justify an increase of contract.

SPECULATIVE BIDDING.

The first round of the bidding is the "indication" round, designed to show the partner where high cards, *aces* and *kings*, lie, modified in the case of a major suit declaration by the possibility of making the game.

The second round of the bidding is the partnership or "combination" round, in which the

object is to support the partner and to push the adversaries.

If the declaration goes any further than a bid of "two" there must be more than a reasonable chance of game or rubber, or fear of the adversaries making the game or rubber. When a player undertakes a high contract there must not only be the chance of his fulfilling it, but a prospect of his winning game in it.

If the high contract has been undertaken with the object of pushing the adversaries, the declarer should have the ability to fulfil his contract, otherwise the adversaries might play to defeat the declarer, and it is *they* who will have done the pushing.

It cannot improve Royal Auction to make the chief object of the bidding the imposition of penalties on one's opponents and the avoidance of penalties oneself. When the bidding is on a sound basis the opportunities for penalties are few, and the declarer may take it for granted that the adversaries will not offer him any penalty points unless it is to keep him from the game or rubber.

In the first game the bidding is comparatively tame. It is usually in the rubber game, when both sides show an eagerness to play the hand, that opportunities for doubling and for penalties arise.

BIDDING TO THE LIMIT.

A player should only bid to the full limit of his hand to make the game or the rubber, or to

prevent the adversaries from making the game or the rubber.

When the hand does not hold out a chance of game it is foolish to undertake a doubtful contract. A contract of "two no-trumps" over a sound suit bid of two rarely holds out a prospect of game. Similarly, a contract of three or four in a minor suit when the game cannot be made should never be undertaken except to prevent the opponents from winning the game. It is always better to allow the adversaries to play the hand when the game is not in danger.

In playing for partial games and intermediate scores, the gain is little and the risk is great. The risk a declarer has to take to score game or rubber would not be justified in attempting to make any score short of game, because there are no stepping stones to game in Royal Auction, and to make two or three by cards in any suit call is only a feeble advance towards the rubber. The cards would be better employed in defeating an adverse contract.

FLAG-FLYING.

A player should never undertake a contract difficult to fulfil when he has no chance of the game, unless it is to save the game or rubber, and he has a clear idea of what he stands to lose by flag-flying. The difference between losing a game and winning it is 250 points, and the difference between losing the rubber and winning it is 500

points. If a player saves the game by flag-flying at the cost of 150 points or the rubber at a cost of 300 points, he has done well, provided that it was a certainty that the game or the rubber would have been lost. This is the point for him to be clear about before overcalling his hand, he must be fairly certain that the game or the rubber would otherwise be lost.

DOUBLING.

DOUBLING, judicious doubling, is the distinctive mark of good Auction. Proneness to double and proneness to bid are two every-day faults, and it is possible to classify players into good, indifferent, and bad, according to the number of times they are found doubling. Of the two bad habits, the doubling habit is the more difficult to eradicate. A player who wishes to save his money will observe two simple rules: when in doubt he will not bid, and, when in doubt he will not double.

THE GOLDEN RULE FOR DOUBLING.

The first point for the would-be doubler to remember is, that the double cannot carry him, but may carry the adversary gamewards.

The second point for him to remember is, that he must catch his hare before he can cook it.

On this latter point, a great deal has been written which, put briefly, means that a double of any suit should not be attempted unless the doubler is prepared to double every suit. That is to say, the double is only effective when the doubler has his man in a corner, and has guarded every avenue of escape. This is by far the most

important rule for doubling, because, if the double suggest a shift, and offer a safe retreat, it is a futile double. .

The golden rule for doubling, therefore, is : *when the declaration suits the would-be doubler's hand he should remain silent, unless he is prepared to double any suit to which the opponents can shift.*

A player should never, by bidding or by doubling, drive his opponents from a bid that suits his hand, and on which they cannot make the game, to one that does not suit his hand and offers them an increased chance of game.

WHEN TO DOUBLE.

The double has its times and seasons. In the rubber game, when both sides show an eagerness to play the hand, there is usually some tall calling, and then opportunities for profitable doubling arise. The double is, indeed, usually right when the adversaries have made a high contract, and the fulfilment of the contract will give them game. An opportunity is then afforded for what is known as a "free double," there is then no fear that the double will help the declarer to make the game, and there is no fear of a shift.

A "free" double is, therefore, a double made when the adversary's completed contract will score game. The theory of the free double is, that the doubler does *not endanger the game*, and, when he has a good chance of defeating the contract, the

extra bonus of 50 to the declarer is not worth considering.

Conversely, when the adversary's contract will *not* give them game, the double is unsound if it any way endanger the game. The double would then only be right on a certainty, and if there is no other declaration to which the adversaries can shift.

To double a suit bid it is not necessary to have good trumps—the possession of trumps is not essential. All that is required is, sufficient tricks to defeat the contract. The doubler should count the number of certain tricks in his hand, and if the answer is satisfactory, and the other reasons for doubling are present, he may double.

DOUBLING. INSTEAD OF BIDDING.

A double that is very effective is, when the second player has made a light overbid in a minor suit over the dealer's one no-trump. This is a situation that frequently arises, and the second player is often let off by the dealer over-calling with "two no-trumps." Frequently, the third player relieves the situation for the second player, by overbidding. If the third player, or the dealer, have reason to suspect the lightness of the call, doubling is the right game, as a double is likely to be more remunerative than playing for game. The second player has undertaken a contract to make eight tricks against a no-trump, and he needs a good hand, and good trumps, to fulfil his

contract. When the third player doubles, he informs the dealer that he is fully protected in the suit, and he gives the dealer the choice of over-calling or of playing to defeat the contract.

There are many opportunities for doubling in preference to bidding, and many occasions in which a player should remain silent in preference to doubling. The novice will usually support his partner when the double would be more profitable—it is precisely on such occasions that expert declaring tells.

When the bid will put the declarer game, it is usually preferable to bid, but there must be a reasonable certainty of game. The chance of making game should only be relinquished when there is a fair certainty of defeating the contract by at least two tricks—that is to say, a penalty score of 200 points, and if it is the rubber game, for a penalty score of 300 points or more.

THE PERSONAL ELEMENT.

The personal element is a great factor in doubling. No one cares to double the careful player who is known to fulfil his contract, but the over-sanguine player, with a reputation for flag-flying, always invites a double. As in other phases of the game, there is no rule for doubling that will fit every case. What would be a sound double under one set of conditions would be

hopelessly unsound under the same conditions but with different players.

BAD DOUBLES.

A patently bad double is a double of "one," because a contract to make the odd trick is one that is easy to fulfil, and, if the declarer has reason to doubt his ability to fulfil it, it is usually quite easy for him to branch to another declaration. The old form of doubling to show that one "can take care of the suit" is no longer used.

The double was not introduced into the game with the object of conveying information, but with the object of penalising a rash declaration. Doubles of "one" in a trump suit, to show that the suit is stopped, are puerile, and it is precisely on such occasions that the caller should remain silent.

The "bluff double," to frighten a player off a suit, is seldom successful against expert play, and usually recoils on the doubler. It was a favourite ruse when the game was young, but the present day declarer knows a trick worth two of that: instead of being frightened off his bid he will remain silent or re-double.

A situation that often arises is when both sides are offering to make nine tricks. The partner of the declarer who has last been over-called is then tempted to double "on principle," instead of bidding, if he has confidence in his partner's bid. But it does not follow that, because both sides

are contracting to make nine tricks, that one of the two bids is unsound. It may be entirely due to unusual suit distribution, when there is a chance of double ruffing on both sides. There is then a small chance of defeating the contract, and the double is not sound.

Generally speaking, all risky doubles are bad doubles, because they double the trick-value of the opponents' declaration, *and, moreover, the opponents may "re-double."* There should be a practical certainty of defeating the contract before a player attempt to double.

And, finally, to reiterate, the double is not sound if it affords the opponents an opportunity to make a safer bid. This is what the doubler has always to guard against; he must be prepared to double any declaration to which his opponents can shift, otherwise his double is not sound.

RESCUING THE PARTNER FROM A DOUBLE.

It is seldom sound to rescue the partner from a double. If the doubler can be trusted to know his business he will not double anything unless he can double everything, and therefore increasing the commitment might increase the loss, and, moreover, the partner will not always be grateful for the rescue.

ORDER OF BIDDING INCLUDING NULLS

	Clubs.	Diamonds.	Nullo.	Hearts.	Royals.	No-Trumps.
1	"one"	"one"	7	"one"	8	"one"
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7	"two"	"two"	14	"two"	16	"two"
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13	"three"	"three"	21	"three"	24	"three"
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19	"four"	"four"	28	"four"	28	"four"
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						

THE SCORE.

139

[illegible]

ORDER OF BIDDING.

There are many instructive features about the order of bidding. The effect of the trick values rising in sequence from 6 to 10 is, that all of the calls are game-winners, and all of them are in the fighting line, but it is only in the early bidding that all of them are effective. In the competition to secure the contract and to win the game, the higher values tell. It is clear that clubs cannot live in the competition against the two leading declarations, no-trumps and royals. It needs "four clubs" to overcall "two no-trumps" and "five clubs" to overcall "three royals."

Diamonds and clubs are equally valuable from the game-winning point of view, but, as forcers, diamonds have a marked advantage over clubs. "Three diamonds" will overcall "two no-trumps," "four diamonds" will overcall "three royals," and "five diamonds" will overcall "four hearts," whereas in each case an extra trick is required in clubs. It is unnecessary to point out that the difference of one trick often means the difference between a possible and an impossible contract.

The disadvantage at which the club suit is placed is seen in the small number of hands in which clubs become the final declaration, *i.e.*, in only four per cent. of the total number of hands played, as against eight per cent. for diamonds. On account of the advantage diamonds possess in the bidding against no-trumps and royals, some players set up

a distinction between the two minor suits. They even bring diamonds into the same grade as hearts, but this is a great mistake owing to the extra trick that is required for game.

Royal Auction is largely a game of no-trumps, royals and hearts, as they are the easiest game-winners, and any one of these declarations swamp all the other declarations put together as regards the number of hands played. No-trumps is oftenest called in the opening bid, but it has frequently to yield the contract to the major suit bids, royals and hearts.

Bringing the suit values close together and making them possible game-winners has undoubtedly resulted in forcing the pace. The important points are 16, 18, and 20—any declaration up to the value of 18 is easily outbid.

The bidding in the first game is comparatively tame, but when the rubber game is being played there is sometimes high bidding to secure the contract. Players will then overstep the safety line and enter into unsound contracts in the effort to win the rubber or to keep the other side from winning it.

A call that is very useful in forcing an adverse bid to the breaking point is the *nullo*. "Three nullo" overcall "two no-trumps," "four nullo" overcall "three no-trumps," and "five nullo," a not unheard of bid, overcall "four no-trumps." The antagonism between the negative and positive no-trumps is one of the features of the game.

EFFECT OF THE SCORE ON THE BIDDING.

The least possible score is now six, which would bring diamonds and clubs within four tricks of the game, and any more advanced score, 12 or more, would make them easy game-winners. The score is therefore useful in promoting the minor suits to the rank of the major suits. Diamonds and clubs become as valuable with any score as royals and hearts with a love score, and it has a marked effect on the bidding.

When royals and hearts are brought within the same number of tricks for game as no-trumps, and the minor suits within only one extra trick of game, any suit call should be selected in preference to playing without trumps.

An advanced score is always an asset. It increases the chances of the adversaries over-reaching themselves in their efforts to prevent the declarer obtaining the contract too easily. But from a game-winning point of view an advanced score has no great importance. It has been calculated that the score helps towards the winning of a game only once in five rubbers.

GAME-LINE.

All bids beyond the game-line are of necessity forced bids; but there may be perfectly sound declaring on both sides when both have crossed the game-line. It means that each side has two suits, and is blank, or nearly so, in the other two

suits. It is then more a contest of suits than of aces and kings, and there is a likelihood of double ruffing, whichever side obtains the contract.

When the suits are distributed in this way, there is little chance of defeating the bid, and big risks have to be faced in order to obtain the contract, and to keep the other side from winning the game.

THE ADVERSARIES' PLAY.

AGAINST A TRUMP DECLARATION.

THE aim of the partners playing against a trump declaration is to make their aces and kings before the declarer has a chance of getting rid of his losing cards—and to ruff with their little trumps before the declarer draws them.

THE OPENING LEAD FROM A SEQUENCE OR A LONG SUIT.

In furtherance of these aims the opening or blind lead should be as safe a one as possible. The ideal safe lead is the king, from a three card suit headed by ace and king, because it retains the lead till the second round, it also retains the command of the suit, and it enables the leader to see the dummy hand. It is the best opening lead whether or not the partner has suggested a lead in the bidding.

When this lead is not available and the third player has called a suit in the bidding, it is usually best to open with the highest card of his suit.

The fate of the game often depends upon the opening lead. With strength in trumps declared against the partners, the long cards of their best suit are not likely to make tricks. At the same

time their longest and strongest suit is the best defensive lead—especially if it contain three honours in sequence or any sequence of high cards. Moreover, it is often useful to establish a long suit, and to force the dealer to ruff.

SINGLETONS, DOUBLETONS, AND STRENGTHENERS AS OPENING LEADS.

A Singleton is a good lead if the partner has called the suit in the bidding, otherwise there is great danger it will help establish the opponents' suit, and it will warn the declarer to draw trumps. A Singleton should therefore only be led when there is no other good lead available, or when the leader is able to stop the trump suit. The only unobjectionable Singleton is a Singleton ace. This is generally conceded to be a good lead. A doubleton is only allowable if it is the partner's suit or if it is a king-queen. With four or more trumps, one should not play for a ruff—a long suit should be opened and, if possible, the dealer should be forced to ruff and so weaken his control of the trump suit.

A strengthening card may be useful in killing a good card in the exposed hand, or in saving a good card in the partner's hand, but the danger of leading a strengthener from a short suit is that it may be playing the declarer's game by helping to establish a suit for him. A strengthener is useful if it is a suit called by the partner, and it may be selected if it is a suit called by the dummy, but, for

obvious reasons, not if the suit has been called by the declarer

UNDESIRABLE OPENING LEADS.

A suit in which a major or a minor tenace is held should, if possible, be avoided. But if there is length in the suit and there is danger of a ruff it is better to spoil a major tenace than to eventually lose the ace.

Other bad suits to lead are suits headed by a weakly guarded king or queen, or an ace from a short suit, as it gives up command of the suit and makes an adverse king a winner.

Some players make the mistake of leading a trump when the partner has doubled the declaration. This is a particularly bad lead, and it is playing through the partner and up to the declarer.

TABLE OF OPENING LEADS AGAINST A TRUMP
DECLARATION.

<i>ACE should be led from</i> Ace King	Continue King	Leading Ace and following with King invites a ruff.
Ace and three or four small cards	Fourth- best	Leading an Ace from any other combination is an undesirable lead.
<i>KING should be led from</i> Ace King Queen Ace King Knave	Continue Queen	Leading the King and then changing the suit indicates that the leader holds Ace and Knave and wishes to be led up to.
Ace King and one or more King Queen Knave 10	Ace 10	The jump to the 10 shows the Queen and Knave
King Queen Knave	Knave	The jump to the Knave shows the Queen.
King Queen 10		It is best to change the suit, as the declarer may be playing the Bath Coup.
King Queen and one or more		
<i>QUEEN should be led from</i> Queen Knave 10 Queen Knave 9 Queen Knave	Continue Knave	Leading from a doubleton headed by Queen is a good lead when the partner has called the suit in the bidding.
<i>KNAVE should be led from</i> Knave 10 9 2		A strengthening card is a good lead when the partner has called the suit in the bidding.
<i>10 should be led from</i> 10 9 8 2		

FROM ANY OTHER COMBINATION THE FOURTH BEST
SHOULD BE LED.

SUMMARY OF LEADS WITH A DECLARED TRUMP.

ACE is led from

Ace King only,

Ace and three or more.

The ace is never led from any combination in which the king is present, except from the doubleton ace-king, so that with this single exception the lead of the ace always denies the king.

The ace should not be led from ace-queen or ace-knave if any other lead is available, unless the suit is a long one and there is danger of its being ruffed.

Leading the ace from a short suit, ace and one or two others, is also undesirable, as it may help establish the suit for the declarer.

KING is led from

Ace King and others,

King Queen and others.

The lead of a king shows that the ace or the queen, or both ace and queen are held.

Leading the king from king and one other is only right when the partner has called the suit in the bidding.

A Singleton king should never be led unless the partner has called the suit in the bidding.

QUEEN is led from

Queen Knave 10,

Queen Knave 9.

The lead of a queen denies both the ace and the king.

KNAVE and 10 are led from the top of sequences.

The lead of the knave denies the queen and the lead of the 10 denies the knave.

From any other combination the **FOURTH BEST** is led.

RETURNING THE PARTNER'S LEAD.

While the return of the partner's no-trump lead is imperative, there is no obligation to return his lead in playing against a suit declaration. The return lead is only right when partner has shown strength in the suit, and the return is up to weakness in the exposed hand.

The partners are not playing to establish their suits, but to save the game in the first place, and to defeat the contract in the second place, and it is important that they should make their winning cards and ruff with their small trumps while they have the chance.

When the third hand has no suit of his own, and there is nothing in the bidding or in the opening lead to guide him, he should look out for dummy's weak spots.

The bidding and the exposed hand are the main factors in the adversaries' play. After dummy's

hand is seen the position of many of the cards becomes known, and the general principle of leading through strength and up to weakness is the most advantageous for the partners to adopt, as it will help the third in hand to win tricks as cheaply as possible.

A strong hand that is led up to gains greatly in strength. The declarer will do all he can to have his tenaces led up to, and so increase their trick value, and the aim of the adversaries should be to lessen their positional value by playing through tenaces, and up to known weakness.

The exposed hand is a mark for the adversaries, the second player should play through weakly guarded honours and tenaces in the exposed hand, and the fourth player should select dummy's weak spots to lead up to. The partners should so arrange their leads as to play through the strong hand and up to the weak one as often as possible.

INFERRING THE STRENGTH AND LENGTH OF THE TRUMP SUIT.

The opening lead, the cards exposed on the table, and the inferences drawn from the bidding, are the real, live factors in the adversaries' play against the declarer. The rest is subsidiary.

Time-honoured maxims of second hand and fourth hand play, discarding, unblocking, echoing, and calling have little practical importance, as most games are won or lost long before they can be brought into use. Everything has to be subordinated to the exigencies of the situation. The

partners have to make their tricks while they can, and as soon as ever they can. If they have saved the game, they have next to try to defeat the contract.

When the opening lead has been made and dummy's cards are seen it is generally possible to form an idea of how the defence ought to be conducted. In drawing inferences as to the position of the high cards and the long suits, the most important is the trump suit, and if the following simple method is adopted it should be possible for the adversaries to form a tolerably clear idea of both the length and strength of the trump suit in all the four hands.

THE SEVEN RULE

In the infancy of Bridge I suggested the Seven Rule as a rough-and-ready guide to the dealer in declaring no trumps :

Four tricks and three suits guarded,

Five tricks and two suits guarded,

Six tricks and one suit guarded.

I at the same time suggested a formula for the declaration of hearts, then the most valuable suit. But this formula was found to be too complicated for the average player, and was discarded in favour of the Seven Rule : *

Four hearts and three top honours,

Five hearts and two top honours,

Six hearts and one top honour.

* First published in the *Pioneer*, Allahabad, in 1900. See also *Bridge Developments*, Brentano's, New York, 1904.

By top honours are meant the ace, king, and queen.

This rule makes the queen count the same as the ace, and obviously needs adjusting. I therefore suggest the following revised formula for a suit declaration :

For the ace of trumps count	...	4	
For the king of trumps count	...	3	
For the queen of trumps count	...	2	
For the knave of trumps count	...	1	
For each card of the trump suit			
	count	...	2

Each card of the trump suit should be counted separately and in addition to the values assigned to the ace, king, queen, and knave.

MINIMUM STRENGTH FOR A SUIT DECLARATION.

The lowest strength on which a trump suit should be declared according to this formula is 14, and the other requirements of a trump declaration must also be present.

The object of the formula is to show the minimum strength required in the trump suit, which should be headed by one or more top honours (ace or king), and which should ordinarily contain not fewer than five cards, *e.g.* :

Ace	Queen	5	4	3	=	16
King	Queen	5	4	3	=	15
King	Knave	5	4	3	=	14

There must also be compensating strength in the plain suits to make up for any strength lacking

in the trump suit, so as to bring the hand up to declaring value according to the rules laid down for the opening bid. See the table of "one royal" and "one heart" bids given at page 55.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE FORMULA.

According to the formula for a suit declaration :

	Ace =	4 points
	King =	3 points
	Queen =	2 points
	Knave =	1 point
		—
	Value of honours =	10 points
Value of 13 trumps at 2 points each =		26 points
		—
Total value of the trump suit =		36 points
		—

The question is how these values are distributed in the four hands—not only the numerical distribution but the high cards.

If the declarer has called one in the suit he should be credited with a minimum of 14 points.

If he has called two in the suit he should be credited with a minimum of 18 points.

When the dummy's hand is laid on the table the number of points he puts down should be added to the declarer's holding, and the sum will show the total trump strength in favour of the declarer.

If the total strength in favour of the declarer is now deducted from 36 it will show the total strength in favour of the adversaries.

Each of the partners will then know approximately what trump strength the other holds. The trump suit being the most important suit, there can be no question of the advantage of being able to infer the trump strength in the two unseen hands. The partners will then have a tolerably clear idea of whether the game is in danger. An unfavourable distribution of the trump suit argues shortness in the plain suits on the declarer's side—the partners must make their aces and kings as soon as possible, and they dare not play a short suit with the idea of ruffing, or a long suit with the idea of forcing the declarer.

This method will seem difficult at first, but it only wants use and experience to become automatic in working.

THE OPENING LEAD AT NO-TRUMPS.

The opening lead is the starting point of the defence, and both the suit to lead and the card to lead are important. It should in the first place be a safe lead, that is one least likely to help the declarer, and in the second place it should be as informative as possible, as it is the first intimation of help to the partner.

The general rule is to lead the highest card of the suit the partner has called in the bidding with the object of clearing his suit before he loses a card of re-entry. A suit is immensely strengthened by being led up to instead of being led away from. The earlier the lead is made the better—before the

partner is forced to give up a re-entry that he might need to establish the suit.

When the leader is in the happy position of holding the ace-king of a suit he will naturally play the king to show the partner the ace, thus retaining the lead till he has seen dummy's hand.

SELECTING PARTNER'S SUIT.

The leader cannot hope to establish two suits against the declarer; he must either try for the establishment of his own suit or the partner's suit. If he selects his own suit in preference to his partner's it should be because it can be established straight away, or if it only needs one card to establish it. If the leader's suit contains a tenace it is clearly better that it should be led up to, and there is the more reason for opening the partner's suit.

The number of tricks the partner declares, and the circumstances under which the declaration is made, will guide the leader in selecting his own or his partner's suit. An original declaration of "two" is of a totally different character from a declaration of "two" in the second round of the bidding—as in the latter case no rigid inference can be drawn as to the partner holding top cards in the suit. Again, a suit bid by the third player, in anticipation of a no-trump by the fourth player, is probably made with the object of suggesting a lead—and it would be wrong to ignore the suggestion. The same reasoning applies to a bid

of "two" by the fourth player over the dealer's no-trump—the leader should not be deterred from opening the partner's suit merely because it has been overcalled by "two no-trumps": the partner has probably a re-entry in a side suit, the lead may help to clear the suit and the re-entry to bring it in, but if the partner has to use the re-entry to establish the suit, he may never be able to bring it in. But if the partner has called "one" in a suit which has been overcalled by a no-trump to his left, and he makes no further bid, it is unwise to try for the establishment of the partner's suit if the leader has a good suit of his own. These are some of the main situations.

If there is any doubt, it is best to give the benefit of the doubt to the partner's suit, because it is always better for a strong suit to be led up to instead of being led away from. The ideal is attained when each partner is able to lead up to the other's strong suit.

THE CARD TO LEAD.

The convention of leading the highest card of the partner's declared suit must not be blindly followed. With ace or king in partner's suit it is generally advisable to play so as to catch the adverse queen, which is the probable "stopper" the declarer has relied upon in increasing his no-trump contract. Instead, therefore, of leading the top card of the partner's declared suit, the lowest, or the lowest but one, should be led—

provided the leader does not block the partner's suit. He must retain a low card with which to return the suit after winning with ace or king.

The general rule of leading the highest card of the partner's suit is subject to a further exception. On the rare occasions in which the leader holds four cards of his partner's suit, he should lead the lowest. But the lead of the lowest of four cards is in itself subject to exceptions, as when queen knave 3 2 are held, when the queen should be led and not the 2, and from any combination such as 10 9 8 2, when the lead of the lowest might result in blocking the suit. *When in doubt, the highest card should be played from any number in suit.*

OPENING LEADER'S OWN SUIT.

When the bidding has not suggested a lead the opening lead against a no-trump declaration should be made from the leader's longest suit with the object (i.) of informing the partner where the leader's main strength lies; because (ii.) the struggle on each side is to establish one or more long suits, and the lead will help to establish the suit early; and because (iii.) it is the lead least likely to help the declarer, and it has a chance of hitting his weak spot and so saving the game before he can get into the lead.

The card to lead is shown in the table that follows. It is vital that the partners should know

what assistance they can afford each other, and what suit or suits have a chance of being established against the declarer.

When the leader has announced a suit and it has been overcalled by the declarer, it means that the declarer is prepared for the lead. Unless the hand contain a card of re-entry and the declared suit can be established with a single lead, it is better to select another lead, provided there is the choice of a second suit.

When, therefore, the leader opens a suit, other than the one he has declared, it is a pretty broad hint to his partner that he holds a tenace and wishes to be led up to. When the third hand is in the lead he should play the highest card of the partner's suit, unless the cards in the exposed hand show that the lead is inadvisable.

If the leader holds a major or a minor tenace (ace—queen or king—knave) without a re-entry, and he has declared the suit in the bidding, he should play a strengthening card from a short suit to put his partner in the lead so that the partner can play through the declarer.

This play is only advisable when the leader has no card of re-entry, with a re-entry it is always better to play for the early establishment of the suit and to utilise the re-entry to bring the suit in.

When there has been no bidding there is a slight advantage in opening a minor suit in preference to a major one, and as between the two minor suits a slight advantage in opening a club. This is the idea underlying the club convention.

When the leader has no long suit, a strengthening card from a *minor* suit will often prove the best lead. The idea in opening a minor suit is that the partner would overcall a no-trump more freely in a major than in a minor one, and, although he has made no announcement of strength in the suit, the lead might materially strengthen his hand.

TABLE OF LEADS AT NO-TRUMPS.

ACE should be led from

Ace Queen Knave and two or more, with a re-entry; otherwise the Queen.

Ace Queen 10 and three or more, with a re-entry; otherwise the 10.

Ace Queen and five others, with a re-entry; otherwise the fourth best.

Ace Knave and five others, with a re-entry; otherwise the fourth best.

Ace and seven others, with a re-entry; otherwise the fourth best.

KING should be led from

Ace King and five or more, with or without a re-entry.

Ace King Queen and one or more, with or without a re-entry,

Ace King Knave 10 and one or more, with or without a re-entry.

Ace King Knave and two or more, with or without a re-entry.

King Queen Knave and one or more, with or without a re-entry.

King Queen 10 and one or more, with or without a re-entry.

King Queen with five or more, with or without a re-entry.

Ace King Knave 10, with a re-entry; otherwise the Knave.

Ace King Knave and one other, with a re-entry; otherwise the Knave.

Ace King and three or more, with a re-entry; otherwise the fourth best.

QUEEN should be led from

Ace Queen Knave and one or more, without a re-entry.

Queen Knave 10 and one or more.

Queen Knave 9 and one or more.

KNAVE should be led from

Ace King Knave 10, without a re-entry.

Ace Knave 10 and one or more.

Knave 10 9 and others.

10 should be led from

King Knave 10 and one or more.

10 9 8 and one or more.

LEADING A HIGH CARD AT NO-TRUMPS.

The principle that should guide the leader in opening his suit against a no-trump declaration is that he should only play a commanding card of his long suit, the ace or king, when he sees his way to gaining complete command of the suit, or when he holds one or more cards of re-entry. With a

re-entry he should play a bold game and take the risk of his suit being stopped in the second or third round as he has a chance to come in again with his re-entry and make the rest of the suit.

The lead of an ace or a king should therefore indicate great strength in the suit and be regarded by the partner as an urgent invitation to unblock the suit. The exposed hand will guide the partner in unblocking.

Some authorities recommend leading the ace instead of the king from ace, king, queen and four or more and from ace, king, and five or more small cards, but very little is really gained by differentiating between ace leads and king leads from the same combination of high cards. Leading the king and not the ace makes for simplicity in the leads and nothing is lost so far as unblocking is concerned, because the partner must prepare to unblock whether the ace or the king is led. The lead of the ace should deny the king, and the lead of the king should show either ace or queen or both.

The lead of the ace should indicate such holdings as ace, queen, knave; ace, queen, 10; ace, queen and others, with a re-entry; that is, the lead of the ace while denying the king should announce a re-entry in another suit or should show great length in the suit.

SIMPLIFYING THE LEADS.

The partners should give each other definite information as to their holdings, anything indefinite

or anything likely to mislead is worse than useless and may help the declarer. It is a great advantage to the partners to simplify the lead—take the case of the knave leads :

King	Queen	<i>Knave</i>	3	2
Ace	<i>Knave</i>	10	3	2
King	<i>Knave</i>	10	3	2
<i>Knave</i>	10	9	2	

The first lead was derived from Whist and the others from Bridge, but the conditions at Royal Auction are different from Whist or Bridge. Leading the knave from the last combination always as a strengthener and never from any other combination would be the most helpful to the partners and the least misleading.

Number-showing leads rarely accomplish anything at Royal Auction, and it is always more important for the partners to know each other's suits than to know how many cards the suits contain.

RETURNING PARTNER'S LEAD AT NO-TRUMPS.

A player must return his partner's no-trump lead unless the exposed hand shows that it would be wrong to do so, or there is clearly a better chance of saving the game or of defeating the contract by adopting another course. It is a fatal mistake to lead up to weakness in the exposed hand before the partner has established his suit, as it might take out a re-entry he may need to bring in his suit.

The next point for the fourth player to remember is that he should give his partner all the assistance

he can in establishing his suit *without getting in his way*.

Dummy.

9 3

Leader.

Fourth Player.

King Knave 10 7 2

Ace 6

If the leader plays the knave, the fourth player must put on the ace for several reasons: firstly, to help in the establishment of the suit; secondly, because it is wrong to finesse against the partner; thirdly, because it would establish the king-10 tenace in the leader's hand; and, fourthly, because playing low would block the partner's suit.

UNBLOCKING.

Opportunities for unblocking rarely occur in the partner's play against a trump declaration, and when they do occur all that the "short" hand has to remember is to play "high." Unblocking has, however, special importance at no-trumps.

Unblocking the partner's suit is a simple matter if the lead is correct and the inferences from the lead are correctly drawn. The play of a commanding card shows that the leader hopes to obtain early and complete control of the suit. When the leader opens with a king, he probably holds the ace or queen-knave, or queen-10, and the fourth player should play the ace or the queen, on the king, unless there are three cards to the knave, or four cards to the queen, in the exposed hand. In the same way the king should be played by the fourth

player if the ace is led, as the lead is probably from ace, queen, knave, and others or ace, knave, 10, and others—it is right to play the king unless the exposed hand shows a clear reason for holding it up.

The card led and the exposed hand must always guide the fourth player in unblocking: the important point is to know the leads and the reasons for each card led.

If the fourth player holds four cards of his partner's suit, the rule is for him, when he is not covering the trick, to play his third best and to retain his lowest card until the last round. The value of so playing lies not only in unblocking, but in the information it conveys, as the partner is often able to place every card in the suit.

THE DISCARD.

The general rule is to discard from weakness, but the rule is liable to many exceptions. The chief thing is for the partners to protect their hands and to give the declarer as little information as possible by their discards. Three things should be carefully avoided:—

1. Unguarding weakly protected knaves and tens.
- ii. Betraying the partner's hand.
- iii. Blanking a suit.

Firstly, a knave or ten will often hold up the command of an adverse suit when the partner's king

or queen has been captured, whereas discarding from such a suit often weakens one's defence at its weakest point.

Secondly, with a major or a minor tenace in the exposed hand there is the danger of betraying the position of the partner's king or queen. The declarer is generally anxious to know which adversary is weak in his strong suit. With ace-queen or ace-knave in dummy's hand the third player should not discard from the suit if he can help it, as it may tell the declarer on which side he should finesse.

Thirdly, blanking a suit allows the declarer to read the partner's hand.

The information gained in the bidding, the exposed hand, the lead and the play, make it unnecessary to make the discard informatory. The discard at Royal Auction is therefore mainly a protective measure. If consistently with this primary object of protection the partners are able to convey information by their discards that is likely to be useful to the partnership they should certainly give it, but there should be no effort to make the discard informatory at the sacrifice of protection.

The discard of a card lower than a seven means that a lead in the suit is not desired, and, conversely, the discard of a seven or a higher card shows strength or protection in the suit. The discard of an unnecessarily high card followed by a lower one is an invitation to the partner to lead the suit

The advantage of so discarding is that it directs the partner's lead, and it tells him that he need not keep up protection in the suit; at the same time it does not give the declarer a clue to the discarder's weak suits. The declarer knows what cards are held against him, and there is always less danger in telling him where strength lies than in letting him know where weakness lies.

The discard of a commanding card shows full control of the suit, and is an urgent invitation to the partner to lead the suit.

The disadvantage of all directive discards from strength is that they may be giving up cards that are good for tricks.

THE CLUB CONVENTION.

When the fourth player doubles a no-trump to his left without having named any suit in the bidding, the conventional opening lead is the highest club in the second player's hand. It is seldom good bidding to call a minor suit against an adverse no-trump, and of the two minor suits, clubs are oftenest shut out in the bidding. It is therefore a fair inference that the doubler holds strength in clubs.

This apparently restricts doubling, because if a club lead will not suit the fourth player's hand he is barred from doubling. In practice, however, it increases the chances of doubling, because a player with a good club suit is given an opportunity of directing his partner's lead. Moreover, the club is

only led when a player has not named a suit in the bidding—if he has called a suit it should be opened in spite of its having been overcalled.

CONVENTIONS AND INFERENCES.

The object of conventions is to give information to the partner. But if the information cannot be made use of, and is in no way vital to the partnership, or if it is derivable from the bidding, the play, and the exposed hand, there is the danger of needlessly enlightening the declarer. Take the case of the "down and out echo," which consists in playing an unnecessarily high card to the first trick and a lower one in the next round; if it is desired to trump the third round of the suit, *and the partner is in the lead*, it is a most useful signal, but if the declarer is in the lead it may warn him to draw trumps.

The bidding simplifies the play to the extent that it locates the position of the suits and the high cards. When there has been a long auction a great deal of information may be gathered as to the lie of the cards. Suit strength is indicated by the various suit bids, strength in at least three suits by a no-trump bid, and all round weakness by a pass.

Ability to draw rapid and correct inferences makes for good auction; this is the most interesting part of the game, and a great help in leading, playing, and finessing.

The adversaries of the declarer should have a clear idea of the number of tricks required, in the

first place, to save the game, and, in the second place, to defeat the contract. When the game is in danger they have to make their tricks as soon as possible, and either partner when he is in the lead and he has not the material for saving the game must credit the other with the card or cards required to save the game, and he should order his play accordingly. When there is only one line of play that will save the game, however remote the chances of success may be, it is the one line that must be adopted. What passes for card instinct and inspiration when a player follows an unexpected course that saves the game is just judgment.

THE DECLARER'S PLAY.

WITH A DECLARED TRUMP.

THERE are three leading ideas in the declarer's play of a suit declaration :

- i. Drawing trumps to bring in a long suit in either hand,
- ii. Using dummy's weak trumps to ruff before drawing trumps, and
- iii. Establishing a cross ruff.

The exposed hand and the inferences from the bidding will tell him in almost every case whether or not the contract is in danger, and, if that is fairly assured, whether he has a chance of winning the game.

In the large majority of hands there are one or more long suits that the declarer has a chance of bringing in : holding a majority of trumps, he should not delay drawing them. If there is any fear of the adversaries ruffing the declarer should make the hand a no-trumper by extracting trumps, and when the trump lead is urgent it is best to play the top honours so as to get out as many trumps as possible without finessing.

When there is no suit to protect, or when dummy has a suit that is not self-established and the hand

has no re-entries either in the trump suit or the side suits to bring the long suit in, nothing is lost by allowing the adversaries to play the hand for the declarer; their ignorance of their resources is often a great help to the declarer.

The declarer must always be careful not to reduce his strength in trumps before drawing the adverse trumps. A common mistake made by beginners is to cheerfully accept ruffs in the adverse suit before playing trumps. Should one of the opponents hold four trumps it gives him an excellent opportunity of further forcing the declarer and so weakening his control of the trump suit. If the declarer is deprived of his long trumps the remaining cards win on their merits and the opponents have a chance of establishing their long suits.

PLAYING WITHOUT TRUMPS.

In playing without trumps the struggle on each side is to establish their long suits. The declarer, while playing for the establishment of his own long suit, must prevent the adversaries from establishing theirs.

As a rule, the possibilities of a hand lie entirely in one or two suits, and by confining his attention to those suits in which extra tricks may be made, it is always possible for the declarant to form a well-defined scheme of attack or defence before playing to the opening lead. The few seconds a player delays in studying the hands and mapping out his plan is really a gain in time, as the rest of

the hand can then be played quickly and without hesitation. It may be necessary as the game progresses to modify the original plan, but when this is necessary a player should still look ahead and arrange in advance how he will play the rest of the hand.

The four chief ways in which the declarer may increase the trick-value of his hand are: (i.) by leading from the weak hand up to the strong one, (ii.) by finessing, (iii.) by creating re-entries in the weak hand, and (iv.) by underplay.

THROWING THE LEAD. FINESSING, AND UNDERPLAY.

There are many hands that require great judgment in arranging the leads. With king, queen and a small card in the exposed hand, and little ones in the declarer's hand, obviously the way to make both the king and the queen is to lead from the declarer's hand. This simple rule of play has many extensions. The declarer knows what cards he can depend upon to take tricks, and he must so plan his leads that he can play up to the strong hand or oblige the adversaries to play up to the strong hand.

He should note where finesses are possible, and arrange his leads in advance so as to get the most out of every combination of high cards in either hand. The declarer, having the sole direction of two hands, can play each combination so as to get the most out of it. The general rule is to lead the

highest card from the weak hand up to the strong one. The chief combinations for finessing are:

<i>Holding.</i>	<i>Lead.</i>	<i>Partner holding.</i>
5 4 3	3 and finesse Queen	Ace Queen 2
5 4 3	3 and finesse 10	Ace Knave 10
Queen Knave 2	Queen and finesse it	Ace 4 3
Knave 10 2	Knave and finesse it	Ace 4 3
Knave 9 4	Knave and finesse it	Ace 10 3 2
King 5 4	King first round ; 4 second round and finesse knave	Ace Knave 3 2
Ace 5 4	Ace first round 4 second round and finesse knave	King Knave 3 2
Knave 5 4	Knave and finesse it	King 10 3 2

Many subtle inferences are open to the declarer in the play of the hand. The adversaries' bids will help him locate honours and will guide him in arranging his leads and especially in taking finesses. The bidding conveys not only positive indications, but also negative ones that are just as useful. For instance, when a player refuses to raise his partner's bid he is marked with less than two tricks, and his silence will help locate missing honours. The opening lead is another valuable source of information; indeed, there is no part of the bidding and the play from which inferences cannot be drawn.

When the exposed hand has great length in a suit with no card of re-entry in a side suit, the declarer should underplay the first round of the

suit from dummy, and so create a re-entry in the suit itself to help in its establishment. For instance, dummy holds Ace, King, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, the declarer should play a small card up to dummy and allow the opponents to make the first trick. By reserving the ace and king for the second and third rounds there is a chance of making six tricks in the suit instead of only two.

Examples of establishing a suit by finessing, double finessing, creating re-entries, unblocking, retaining command of an adverse suit and of underplay will be found in the illustrative hands.

LOCATING ADVERSE STRENGTH.

It has been pointed out that the more known factors one has to deal with in a game the greater the skill required to play it well. Of all games of the Whist and Bridge family the number of known factors is greatest in Royal Auction, and the opportunities for drawing subtle inferences are correspondingly greater than at Whist or Bridge.

The declarer begins the play of the two hands with a full knowledge of his resources—if he is able to locate adverse high cards and suit strength he can reduce the management of the hands to a double dummy problem. This should be his aim, and in playing a no-trump hand he will find the scale of values given at page 32 an invaluable aid in locating adverse high cards, if he will adopt the following plan.

HOW TO USE THE COUNTING SYSTEM.

The counting cards in each suit valuing the—

Ace	at 7 points
King	„ 5 points
Queen	„ 3 points
Knave	„ 2 points
10	„ 1 point

Amount to a total for each suit of , 18 points.

As there are four aces, kings, queens, knaves, and tens, the total value of the four suits (18 by 4) amounts to 72 points; in other words all the counting cards in the pack amount to 72 points.

If the declarer's hand amounts to 32 points and dummy lays down a hand worth 20 points, a very simple calculation will show that the value of the remaining honours held by the adversaries of the declarer are only worth 20 points.

If one of them has made a suit bid it indicates strength in the suit: he probably holds some such combination as—

Ace	10	
King	Queen	
King	Knave	10

that is to say, the value of the counting cards held by him may be reckoned at 8 points.

Practically the entire strength of the four hands is now disclosed to the declarer, and the knowledge will help him in arranging his leads and finesses. Even without a call from the "other side" the leads show high card strength, and as the game

progresses and one of the opponents plays an ace or a king the situation becomes clearer.

This is merely offered as a suggestion to the advanced player. The expert bidder who constantly uses the rule soon acquires an astonishing facility in locating high cards that are held against him, and, however difficult it may at first sight appear, the man who would play good Auction is strongly advised to always count the cards by this rule. Its lines of development are practically unlimited, and the player who uses the system will by a process of elimination locate adverse strength with astonishing precision.

CONCERNING NULLOS.

VARIOUS TRICK VALUES ASSIGNED TO NULLOS.

NULLOS are no-trumpers with a 'minus value. They are reckoned according to the popular valuation at 8 points a trick, ranking below hearts in the bidding.* The player tries to lose as many tricks as possible, the fewer the tricks he makes, the greater his score. Tricks are reckoned thus: for six tricks only, and for each trick under six, 8 points a trick.

Various trick values have been assigned to nullos by way of experimentation. They were at first given precedence of all the suits, and even outranked no-trumps, with the result that, at 11 points a trick, the game was largely nullos. It required a two-bid to overcall a nullo, and diamonds

* The values favoured by the leading authorities are :

Mr. A. R. Metcalfe	11	
Mr. Fred C. Thwaites	11	
Mr. R. F. Foster	10	ranking below no-trumps.
Mr. Wilbur C. Whitehead	10	ranking below no-trumps.
Mr. Milton C. Work	10	ranking below no-trumps.
	or	8 ranking below hearts.
Mrs. Grace G. Montgomery	8	ranking below hearts.
Miss Florence Irwin	8	ranking below hearts.

8 is also the popular valuation for the nullo bid in England and in India.

and clubs were seriously disadvantaged, as "four diamonds" or "four clubs" were needed to overcall "two nullos." The other extreme was tried, but was speedily abandoned because when placed below clubs at 5 points a trick, the nullo call had only a feeble voice in the bidding.

Expert opinion is still divided whether nullos should be valued at 8 points a trick, and placed below hearts in the bidding, or at 10 points a trick, and placed below no-trumps in the bidding. The 10 point nullo is merely a reversion to the valuation tentatively adopted when the 11 point nullo was found to be unsatisfactory. Both have the disadvantage of placing too high a premium on the low cards, whereas the 8 value hits the happy medium. Nullos are, then, forceful without being obtrusive. Their inferior position to hearts, while counting the same as hearts, is a happy idea, as they stand at the very junction lines of the higher and the lesser contracts.

TABLE OF TRICK AND HONOUR VALUES INCLUDING NULLOS.

When the Declaration is	Clubs	Diamonds	Nullo	Hearts	Royal Spades	No-trumps
<i>Tricks.</i>						
For each trick over six	6	7	...	8	9	10
For six tricks only, and for each trick under six	...	...	8	...	...	...
When the declaration has been doubled	12	14	16	16	18	20
When the declaration has been redoubled	24	28	32	32	36	40
<i>Honours.</i>						
For three honours held in one hand or conjointly	12	14	—30	16	18	30
For four honours held conjointly	24	28	—40	32	36	40
For five honours held conjointly	30	35	...	40	45	...
For four honours in one hand ...	48	56	—100	64	72	100
For four honours in one hand, the fifth in partner's hand	54	63	...	72	81	...
For five honours in one hand ...	60	70	...	80	90	...
For chicane	12	14	...	16	18	...
For double chicane	24	28	...	32	36	...
For little slam 50	For grand slam 100					

In playing nullos and no-trumps the honours are the aces. If each side holds two aces there is no score for honours.

A CONTRACT TO LOSE TRICKS.

All the suits are of equal value in playing nullos, that is to say, the hand is played without trumps, the cards ranking from the ace to the two as in no-trumps; everything else is reversed. Instead of the high cards, the low ones are the valuable cards—instead of winning tricks the declarer tries to lose them; and the number of tricks he declares is the number he undertakes to force the adversaries to win in excess of the book.

He is allowed six "safe tricks" when he declares "one nullo," that is, he contracts to force the adversaries to win the odd trick. When he declares "two nullos" he engages to force the adversaries to win two tricks more than the book of six tricks, when he declares "three," "four," "five," "six," and "seven nullos," he engages to force the adversaries to win three, four, five, six, or seven tricks in excess of the book, according to the number he declares.

When the Contract is	Declarer undertakes to win only.
"One"	Six tricks
"Two"	Five tricks
"Three"	Four tricks
"Four"	Three tricks
"Five"	Two tricks
"Six"	One trick

The declarant gets the full benefit of any tricks he *loses* in excess of his contract, just as he would do for any tricks scored in excess of his contract in any other declaration. Should he, however, take more tricks than his contract allows, he is "shy" by the number he makes over his book, and the opponents score 50 for each "over" trick. Doubling and redoubling affect the trick and penalty scores in the same way as they do all other declarations.

HOW HONOURS ARE SCORED.

The honours are the aces, and they are also scored contrariwise. In a no-trump contract they score for the holders, in a nullo contract they score against the holders. Honours are reckoned thus :

Three aces (held by one or both partners)
count 30 against the side holding the
aces,

Four aces (held conjointly) count 40 against
the side holding the aces,

Four aces, all in one hand, count 100 against
the side holding the aces.

There is no score for honours if each side holds two aces.

SIZING UP THE CONTRACT.

It is not so difficult as it may appear at the first blush to reckon the trick score, as all one need do is to count the number of tricks the adversaries of the declarant have taken over six. If they have

taken eight tricks, the declarant has scored "two nullos," if they have taken nine tricks, the declarant has scored "three nullos," and so on.

Another way of sizing up the contract is to deduct the amount of the bid from seven—the difference indicating the number of "safe tricks" allowed the declarer. Thus a bid of "*three* nullos" would mean that the declarer engages to take only four tricks, and a bid of "five" that he engages to take only *two* tricks. This is a useful method of computing the "safe tricks" the declarant is allowed.

ONLY AN ADDITIONAL DECLARATION.

The nullo bid is only an additional declaration designed to give the holders of poor cards a voice in the bidding, and so, to some extent, to discount luck. Royal Auction is no longer to be regarded as a game of aces and kings, and one in which good cards must win; the hitherto despised deuces, threes, and fours are given a distinct bidding value. It is the universal experience of players that Royal Auction is a most enjoyable game when one holds good cards, but is singularly dull and uninteresting, as "Bascule" points out, when one holds a succession of bad hands—"there is no other game in which a player who is out of luck has so little fun for his money and is so powerless." The obvious remedy is to try nullos.

The new bid does not interfere in any way with the conventions of the game, whether they are valued at 8 points a trick or at 10 points a trick.

It is possible, as stated elsewhere, to go from a table at which nullos are played to one at which they are not played without any mental disturbance. The game remains unchanged so far as its conventions are concerned, but one feels that there is something missing—the bidding loses much of its piquancy.

Nullos undoubtedly make the game more versatile, and they are great as forcers. It is only after one has got accustomed to bidding with nullos that one finds the bidding tame without them. When the bidding goes to “two no-trumps,” with all-round strength, it practically silences everybody. There is nothing to threaten the reign of the no-trump declarer as monarch of all he surveys, except when the bidding has been opened with a nullo and the partner is able to support the bid; then the contest becomes keen and spirited. The side having the high cards, who would have won by sheer brute force, has often to yield to the little cards that are now potent factors in the bidding, and need no longer hide their diminished heads.

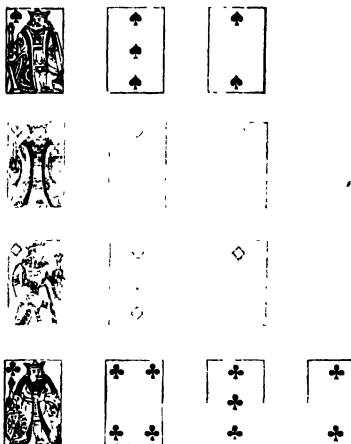
THE OPENING BID : "NULLOS."

THREE SUITS GUARDED.

Deuces, threes, and fours are the cards on which the dealer should declare a nullo, provided he holds a majority of them. They are to the declarer of a nullo what the ace, king, and queen are to the declarer of a no-trump; and just as in no-trump the declarer should have three suits guarded, in calling a nullo he should have three suits *guarded with losing cards*.

This is a point the beginner has some difficulty at first in seizing, but the difficulty disappears when the perfect nullo hand is considered, and how its nullo-perfection may be marred by the presence of the high cards so desirable in playing no-trumps. The more certain losers the declarer has, the better the call, but while the nullo call is contingent on the presence of losers, the presence of possible

winners is no bar to the call, if the winners are properly guarded by losing cards.



This would be a *perfect* nullo except for the four kings, but notwithstanding the four kings, it can be readily seen that this hand has rare nullo possibilities. The kings are not necessarily four tricks, as it is possible to play them on the aces, or to discard them.

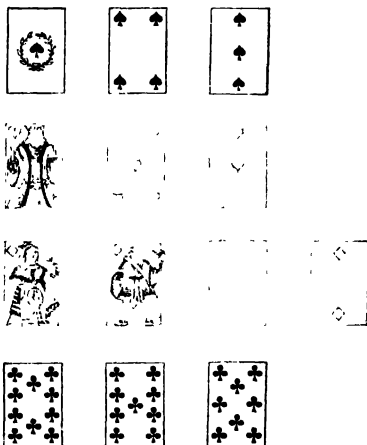
PROTECTED SUITS.

The point for the beginner to remember is that such a combination as Queen 4 3 2 is practically as excellent a suit for nullos as the 4 3 2, because the queen being protected with three certain losers, the adversaries cannot force a trick upon the declarer till the fourth round, and before

the fourth round arrives it is likely the declarer will have had an opportunity of discarding the queen.

Even with such a suit as King 10 5 3 it is always possible to "underplay" the suit so as to escape making a single trick. The absence of high cards is therefore less vital to the nullo bid than the presence of low cards.

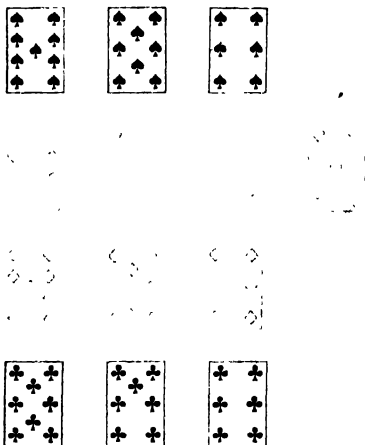
Here is a nullo hand with three suits guarded:



It is easily seen that the worst suit in this hand for the nullo bid is the club suit, because there are no low cards in it. The 10 9 8 of clubs cannot be underplayed: they might all be forced to take tricks. A combination of high and low cards favours the nullo bid, but the "intermediate cards," when held without the low ones, bar the nullo bid.

A YARBOROUGH MAY BE A BAD NULLO.

The dealer need no longer pass the declaration with a poor hand, but it would be a fatal mistake to suppose that a Yarborough is necessarily a good nullo.



This would be a very bad nullo, and a very bad dummy for the nullo bidder. It holds almost all the intermediate cards in the pack, and is lacking in the low cards.

The hand is one on which the dealer can do nothing but pass the declaration, *and a hand on which the dealer passes should be a warning to the partner against bidding nullo.*

It is the cards that hold a central position between the high cards, ace king queen knave, and the low cards, 5 4 3 2, and which are known

as the *intermediate cards*, the 10 9 8 7 and 6, that need to be carefully considered before the dealer can call a nullo, because if they are not properly guarded with the low cards they can be forced to take tricks.

"BAD FOR NULLOS."

Royals	..	8	6	5	3
Hearts	...	Knave	10	6	
Diamonds	...	9	6	4	
Clubs	...	10	7	4	

Royals	...	Queen	Knave	9	8
Hearts	...	Knave	10	4	2
Diamonds	...	9	6	3	
Clubs	...	7	5		

Royals	...	Ace	10	9	7
Hearts	...	6			
Diamonds	...	Knave	7	6	
Clubs	...	Knave	10	7	6 3

Royals	...	Knave	9	6	3
Hearts	...	Ace			
Diamonds	...	10	6	4	3
Clubs	...	Queen	Knave	9	4

"COMPOSITE HANDS."

There are some hands in which there is no doubt about the declaration : they declare themselves, but in many cases a choice between two or more

declarations has to be made With the introduction of the nullo call this choice has been greatly extended, because strength in nullos may be held in combination with strength in no-trumps or in any suit. Nullos have, indeed, as many phases as the moon.

There are many openings for nullos that are likely to be missed till the declarer gets accustomed to looking out for them. This is especially the case when the hand offers a sound royal or heart bid :

Royals	...	King	Queen	5	4	2
Hearts	...	Ace	4	2		
Diamonds	..	6	2			
Clubs	...	King	4	3		

Royals	...	3				
Hearts	..	Ace	King	6	3	2
Diamonds	..	King	9	4	3	2
Clubs	..	King	2			

In the first case, the king and queen of spades cannot hurt the hand when there are three "guards" in the suit; there is the chance of discarding them, as well as the other high cards, after the diamonds have been played. In the second case, the short black suits, and the chances of "ducking" when the reds are played, make the hand a nullo of the first rank.

Here are other hands on which a nullo should be called in preference to a suit bid :

Royals	.	King	3			
Hearts	.	Ace	Queen	5	4	3
Diamonds		6	3	2		
Clubs		King	5	2		

Royals	.	King	Knave	5	3	2
Hearts		King	4	3		
Diamonds		King	Queen	3	2	
Clubs		5				

All these four hands would be sound suit-bids, but they are better nullo bids, and if the partner raises the bid to "two nullos," and can be trusted to know what he is about, they can be carried to "three" and "four nullos," as they are all good enough to go the game on. If the partner makes a warning bid, the declarer has a chance of coming in again with a suit bid.

There may even be a doubt whether the hand should be played as a *negative* or a *positive* no-trumper. Such hands are very telling in the bidding, and have been nick-named nullo no-trumpers.

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

"NULLOS," NOT "NO-TRUMP."

Royals	...	King	6	4	3	
Hearts	...	Queen	3	2		
Diamonds	...	Ace				
Clubs	...	King Knave	4	3	2	

Royals	...	King	5	4	2	
Hearts	...	King	4	3		
Diamonds	...	Ace	2			
Clubs	...	King	7	3	2	

Royals	...	Ace	9	3	2	
Hearts	...	King Queen	4	2		
Diamonds	...					
Clubs	...	Queen 10	4	3	2	

"NULLOS," NOT "ROYALS" OR "HEARTS."

Royals	...	5	4			
Hearts	...	Ace Queen	6	4	3	
Diamonds	...	10	6	4	2	
Clubs	...	Ace	3			

Royals	...	Ace	10	4	3	2
Hearts	...	5	2			
Diamonds	...	King	4	3		
Clubs	...	Knave	3	2		

Royals	...	7	3	2		
Hearts	...	Ace	9	6	4	3
Diamonds	...	Ace				2
Clubs	...	6	3	2		

A NON-INFORMATORY DECLARATION.

It must be distinctly understood that when there is a choice in the bidding between an attacking declaration and a nullo, the attacking declaration should be preferred *unless the hand holds out rare nullo possibilities*. By calling a nullo the declarer does not give up the chance of coming in again, if the declaration is overcalled and the partner is unable to respond to the nullo bid.

Players who adopt waiting tactics, will readily see the advantage of declaring a nullo with hands on which it is more useful to get information than to give it. The difference between passing with such hands and declaring a nullo is that the nullo does not deceive the partner whereas the pass does. The nullo is merely non-informatory, it does not inform the partner as to the position of the good cards, but the pass deceives the partner as to their position.

"NULLOS," NOT "DIAMONDS" OR "CLUBS,"

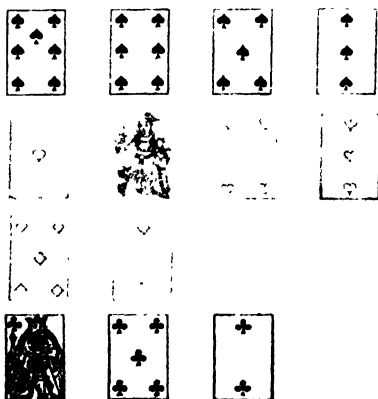
Royals	...	Knave	6	3	2		
Hearts	...	Knave	2				
Diamonds	...	King					
Clubs	...	King	Queen	6	5	3	2
Royals	...	3					
Hearts	...	Ace	2				
Diamonds	...	King	Queen	6	5	4	3
Clubs	...	8	7	4	3		
Royals	...	Queen	7	4	2		
Hearts	...						
Diamonds	...	King	3	4			
Clubs	...	King	Knave	10	6	3	2

"NULLOS" IN PREFERENCE TO A PASS.

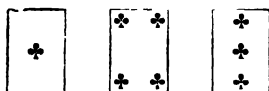
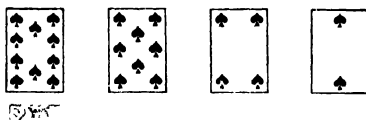
Royals	...	Queen	5	4	3
Hearts	...	Queen	8	3	2
Diamonds	...	King			
Clubs	...	Queen Knave	3	2	
Royals	..	Queen	7	3	2
Hearts	...	Knave	6	4	3
Diamonds	...	Knave	8	4	2
Clubs	...	Ace			
Royals	...	Queen Knave	2		
Hearts	...	King	3	2	
Diamonds	...	King	4	3	
Clubs	..	Queen	5	4	2

A SPECULATIVE BID.

The nullo, like the no-trump bid, is largely speculative. A great deal depends on the two hands fitting in. Here is an instance of well-nigh perfect dovetailing:

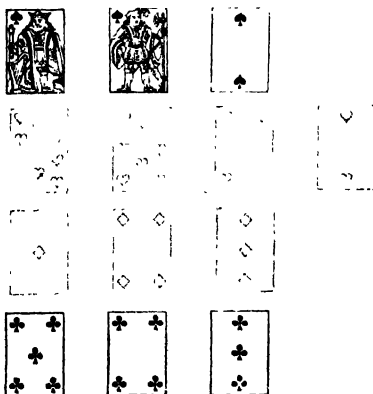
DECLARER'S HAND.

DUMMY'S HAND.



However the other cards may be distributed, four by cards is a certainty; but, if in the dummy's hand the royals and hearts and the diamonds and clubs are transposed thus—

DUMMY'S HAND.



the declarer cannot be sure of more than the odd trick, although the two hands have practically all the nullo cards in the pack. The success of a nullo, like the success of a no-trumper, depends a great deal upon luck.

BLANK SUITS AND SINGLETONS.

Blank suits and Singletons are bad holdings in playing no-trump, but they are elements of strength in playing nullos. A blank suit offers splendid opportunities of getting rid of high cards, and, next to a blank suit, a Singleton or a doubleton is very helpful. It is mainly when the cards are unevenly distributed in the four suits that interesting nullo hands occur. Here is one on which any score up to a grand slam is possible provided the partner does not come in the way.

Royals	...	4							
Hearts	...	Knave	7	5	4	3			
Diamonds	...								
Clubs	...	King	Knave	10	7	5	4	2	

It is the exposed hand that the declarer has to reckon with.

THE EXPOSED HAND.

The exposed hand is a great stumbling block to the nullo bidder. Dummy's high cards, and the intermediate ones, are targets for the opponents. It follows that no high opening bid of nullos should

under any circumstances be made. But the fear of finding a bad dummy should not deter a player from calling "two nullos" when he has all four suits protected with low cards before his partner has had a voice in the bidding.

LOW CARDS *versus* HIGH CARDS.

The nullo bid is valuable as a counterpoise to the three major declarations, no-trumps, royals, and hearts, and especially to no-trumps. It forces the holders of good cards to declare them up to their full value, or to forego playing for game, and the holders of good cards may even be forced to declare them beyond their full value, rather than make a present of nine or ten tricks to the nullo bidder. The better the cards the opponents hold, the more compact their sequences, the better the stand the nullo hand can make against them. The fun of nullos comes in when one of the opponents holds four aces. Instead of having it all his own way, he is forced to bid beyond the limits of safety. He has to take a big risk not only to obtain 100, the honour value of four aces, but to avoid losing 100, as the aces will score against him, a difference of 200 points for honours alone

A FORMULA FOR THE NULLO BID.

The following formula may be helpful to beginners in declaring a nullo in the opening bid:

Count the values of the pips of the two lowest cards in every suit, reckoning 10 for each court

card: if the total comes to 35 or less (and the hand does not offer a choice of any other attacking declaration), it is a nullo.

The counting may be done quite easily by tens, and if it foots up to much more than three tens, the beginner had better leave it alone; but if it just scales the three tens, it is quite a sound nullo as an opening bid.

Blank suits and Singletons are of special value in playing a nullo, and they should be taken into account in the declaration. In reckoning the nullo value of a hand the declarer should *deduct*

3 for every Singleton suit,
6 for every blank suit.

If the total after making the deduction comes to 35 or less, it is a sound nullo.

The value of the counting system will chiefly appear when it is a question of the partner raising the nullo bid against an adverse no-trump. There are nullos of the first order and there are borderline nullos—and nullos that cross the borderline and require expert play to see them through.

The beginner should regard—

anything up to 20 as a first-rate nullo;
anything between 20 and 30 as a good nullo;
anything between 30 and 35 as a borderline nullo;
' anything between 35 and 40 as a very doubtful nullo.

Only an expert should risk nullos with a hand counting 40.

No claim is made for the infallibility of this formula. A formula which only takes into account two cards out of a suit of four or more cards, can obviously lay no claim to accuracy. At the same time it is one that will rarely be found to break down in practice. It is perhaps necessary to add that when the formula is applied to Singleton and doubleton suits, only half values should be reckoned.

Unfortunately, in order to make the formula a strictly accurate one it would be necessary to so complicate it as to render it of no practical use. There is the assurance, however, of those who use it that it works very well as it is, and it is therefore included here as a help to the vacillating declarer.

HOW TO PLAY NULLOS.

THE BLIND LEAD AT NULLOS.

A SINGLETON is a good lead against a nullo, because it enables the leader to get valuable discards when the suit is returned. The lower the card the better the lead. Another good lead is a doubleton, especially if it contains two low cards.

Failing these two leads, one of the safest blind leads is an intermediate card (the third lowest) of a four or five card suit which is properly protected with low cards. With such a suit, for instance, as Ace, 7, 5, 4 the opening lead should be the 7.

The declarer has the great advantage in playing a nullo of knowing how many losers he has in the two hands under his control, and it should be the aim of the partners to inform each other of their holdings, and so place themselves as far as possible on level terms with the leader.

THE MINUS FOUR RULE.

The lead of the third lowest card of a suit that is protected with low cards is one of the safest, and

at the same time one of the most informative leads. Assuming that the suit is distributed like this:—

Knave 8 5 4

			B			
		Y			Z	
			A			

Ace 7 6 3 King 9 2

Queen 10

If the 7 is led and the partner knows that it is the conventional lead of the third lowest card of the suit, all he has to do is to deduct four from seven (the spots on the card that is led) to discover that there are three cards lower than the card led that are not in the leader's hand. In this case he has one lower card, and the exposed hand two lower ones, and he knows that A must take the trick unless he is chicane.

The rule is quite simple, the partner has always to deduct *four* from the face value of the card that is led, to find out how many lower cards are out. It is, therefore, called the *minus four* rule. His own hand, and the exposed hand, will tell the third player in almost every case, with fair certainty, whether or not he should cover the trick. He is enabled not only to place with certainty all the lower cards, but from the exposed and his own hand he can place most of the higher ones. In the case under consideration he can place every card up to the 10 before playing to the trick. This knowledge of how the cards in a suit are

distributed is usually an invaluable guide to the third player when he is in the lead.

ONLY A FEW LEADING IDEAS IN THE PLAY OF A NULLO.

The play of a nullo hand looks more difficult than it really is. This is due entirely to its newness. After all, there are only a few leading ideas in the play, and if these are mastered, one at a time, a player will soon become expert in manipulating a nullo hand. Instead of a confusing mass of abstract ideas dealing with questions of the blind lead and the management of the cards, it would be more useful to the learner to play a hand completely through. The hand that follows has been specially selected on account of the many instructive features that will be found in the bidding and the play, but especially in the play.

TEST HAND, No. 1.

Royals ...	Ace	8	5	3
Hearts ...	King	6	2	
Diamonds	Queen	9	5	3
Clubs ...	Queen	3		

Royals ...	Kg.	Kn.	9	7	4		Royals ...	Qn.	10	6	2
Hearts .	Qn.		7	4			Hearts ...	Ace	10	8	
Diamonds	Kn		6				Diamonds	Kg.			
Clubs, ...	Kg.		10	9			Clubs ...	Ace	8	7	5 2

Royals ...					
Hearts ...	Knave	9	5	3	
Diamonds	Ace	10	8	7	4 2
Clubs ...	Knave	6	4		

THE BIDDING.

A	"One Nullo"
Y	"One Royal"
B	"Two Nullos"
Z	"Two Royals"
A	"Three Nullos"
Y	"No"
B	"No"
Z	"Three Royals"
A	"Four Nullos"

Closed.

COMMENTS ON THE BIDDING.

A's hand, according to the nullo formula, totals 18 and is a first-rate nullo—it has a black suit which is an invaluable aid in getting rid of winning cards.

B's overcall is in order because he has four guarded suits. While the original declarer may call a nullo with only three guarded suits, the partner should not raise a nullo unless he has all four suits guarded with low cards. This is one of the most important rules for raising the nullo bid, and unless it is invariably followed, the original declarer of a nullo will never know how far he may safely carry the bid.

B's hand appears to conflict with the nullo formula, but it really does not so conflict. As already stated, the formula should not be applied to

a doubleton ; if it is applied, the suit should only be reckoned at half value.

Z has a splendid hand for raising his partner's bid and is prepared to go to "three royals." A has no hesitation in calling "three nullos"; it is easy to see that if his partner has small cards in the four suits the two hands must dovetail.

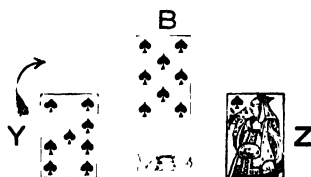
Y says "no" because having declared his full strength in the first round he must perforce be silent.

Z is fully justified in declaring "three royals" but he cannot go further, seeing his partner's persistent refusal to speak.

A now advances the bidding to "four nullos," prompted by two considerations, his splendid nullo hand and the fact that he is blank in royals and he can do little to prevent the game in that suit.

THE PLAY OF THE HAND.

TRICK 1.



A

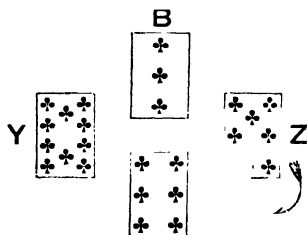
Y's correct lead is the 9 of spades. His partner can by applying the minus four rule place every card in the suit.

Z plays his highest card, the queen, with confidence, as the five cards lower than the 9 are in his hand and the exposed hand, and he must credit his partner who declared royals with the two unseen honours.

A discards the knave of hearts in preference to the ace of diamonds because he knows the diamond suit is safe, for reasons that will presently appear. He does not select the knave of clubs for his first discard because he can play it on dummy's queen, which must take a trick.

THE RETURN LEAD.

TRICK 2.



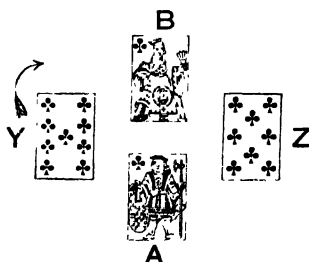
A Singleton is a good return lead, but Z dare not lead his Singleton king of diamonds as it would enable the exposed hand to get rid of the queen, and it might also enable the dealer to play a high card. An ace or a king is bad to lead off with, but either of the cards may be played second or third in hand, because then only one opponent is able to get rid of a high card.

Z cannot return a spade for fear of giving the dealer a valuable discard, and his hearts are too bad to open; his best lead is the third lowest club, the 7. The dealer ducks the first round to coax Y to play low. Y puts on the 10, which denies the knave.

The usual rule of play, second, third, or fourth in hand, is to play the lowest of a sequence; this rule is reversed in nullos, and the highest card of a sequence is played to enable the partner to know that there is no higher card in sequence. This play is the most informatory, as it enables the partner to place the next higher card to the card played. Y's play of the 10 of clubs enables Z to locate the knave with the dealer.

THROWING THE LEAD.

TRICK 3.



Y cannot lead spades for reasons already pointed out; a heart is not promising, as dummy can duck the lead; and diamonds are obviously bad.

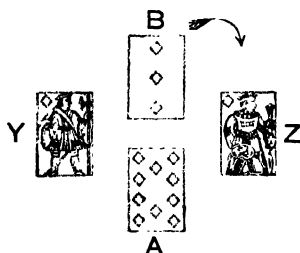
If the position is analysed it will be found that whatever Y now leads will not alter the result in

his favour. His best play is to put B in the lead, and to force him to come up to Y in any of the remaining suits, spades, hearts, or diamonds.

Throwing the lead is an important factor in the play of a nullo hand. It is a great advantage to be in the lead at no-trumps, but it is a great disadvantage to be in the lead at nullos.

COUNTING THE CARDS IN EACH SUIT.

TRICK 4.

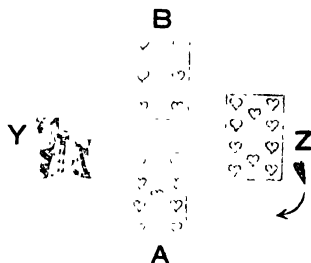


It is useful in playing nullos to count every card in a suit, and just as a player reckons his high sequences in playing no-trumps, he should reckon low sequences in playing nullos. Having the 2, 3, 4, and 5 of diamonds in the two hands the declarer sees that the opponents cannot duck the suit. The great advantage the declarer has in playing a nullo is a knowledge of his own losers and the opponents' winners. The knowledge of his resources in the diamond suit tells the declarer that however the king, knave, and six may be held, the opponents must take at least two tricks in diamonds. The play of the king, from Z and the knave from Y

leaves the 6 a certain winner, and the declarer knows that he can place the lead with a low diamond *and the opponents cannot return the suit to him.*

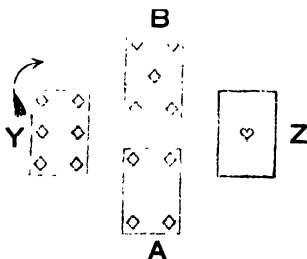
VALUE OF EXIT CARDS.

TRICK 5.



Z's choice of a lead is now narrowed down to the heart suit, a club would allow dummy to throw away a winner, and a spade might give the same opportunity to the dealer. The dealer refuses to take over the trick having a sure exit card in the 2 of hearts.

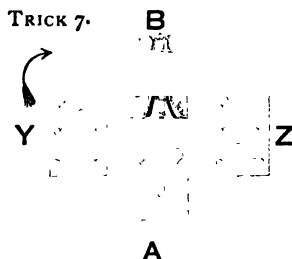
TRICK 6.



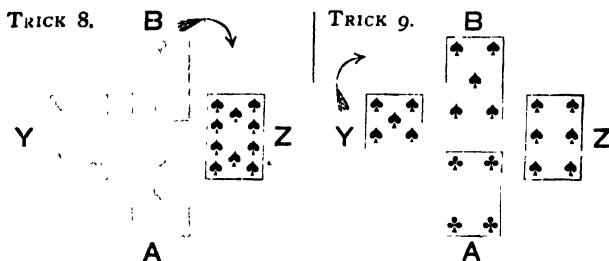
The diamond suit looks better than the heart: it enables Z to get rid of the ace of hearts. An

analysis of the hand will show that Y would not have done better by playing a heart.

TAKING AN INEVITABLE TRICK.



The dealer has to cover with dummy's king and to lead the 2 of hearts so as to throw the lead:

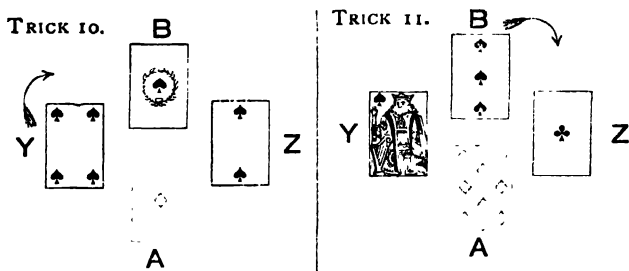


Y has no better lead than the 7 of spades, he achieves nothing by playing the 4 of spades and less by playing a high spade.

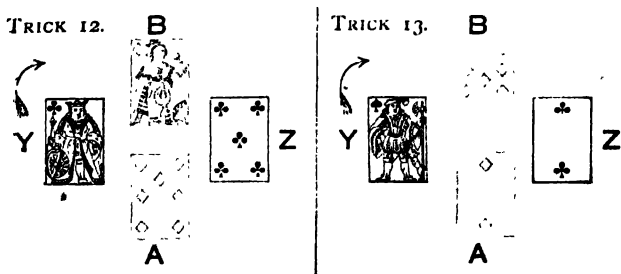
The declarer has to play dummy's cards with great caution so as to make his exit at the right moment. It is in the last few tricks, when the

hand is practically reduced to a double dummy problem, that play tells. Usually when a trick has to be taken it is best to take it early in the hand, because exit cards become more valuable as the players are nearing the last few tricks. If there is any doubt about an exit card, the player should not postpone taking an inevitable trick.

END PLAY AT NULLOS.



This is the correct moment to play the ace of spades and to throw the lead at trick 11 with the 3 of spades. The two last tricks are:—



The declarer makes his contract and the game.

209.

Here is another interesting hand that occurred in actual play : the declarer made a grand slam against expert play.

Royals				10		5			
Hearts				King		10			
Diamonds				King		Queen			
Clubs				4					

Royals ... Kg.	9	7				Royals ... Ace Qn.	8	4
Hearts	Ace	Qn.	Kn.	9	7	Hearts ...	3	2
Diamonds	Kn.	7				Diamonds	9	5
Clubs ...	7	6	5			Clubs ... Ace Kg Kn.	10	2

Royals				Knave		6		3	
Hearts				6					
Diamonds				Ace		10		8	4
Clubs				Queen		9		8	3

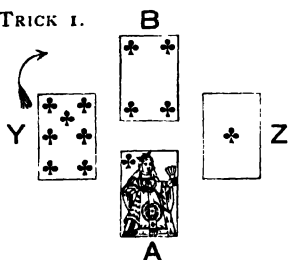
A	"One Nullo"
Y	"One Heart"
B	"Two Nullos"
Z	"No"
A	"No"
Y	"Two Hearts"
B	"No"
Z	"No"
A	"Three Nullos"
Y	"No"
B	"No"
Z	"Three Hearts"
A	"Four Nullos"

Closed.

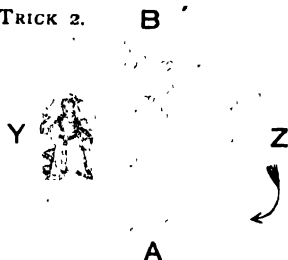
VALUE OF NULLOS AS FORCERS.

This hand is a good instance of the value of nullos as forcers. In the first round Z might have called "three" clubs to indicate assistance for no-trumps, but no-trumps with the diamonds adversely held would have been fatal. The first four tricks were :

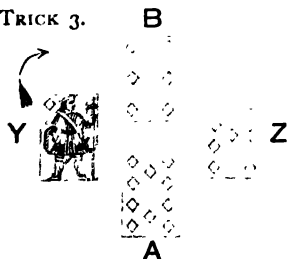
TRICK 1.



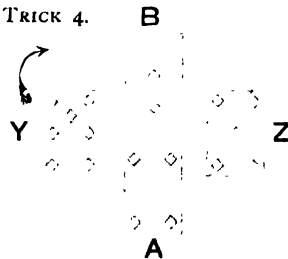
TRICK 2.



TRICK 3.



TRICK 4.



It makes no difference if Y opens with his doubleton diamond suit. Indeed, against any lead and any play the declarer cannot be prevented from making a grand slam, although there are nine

bridge honours in the two hands, an ace, two kings, two queens, a knave, and three tens, to say nothing of nines and eights that are possible winners.

MAKING A TARGET OF DUMMY.

The exposed hand is the great mark for the partners playing against a nullo contract.

One method that has been suggested for the adversaries' play is to concentrate attention on dummy's hand, to draw his exit cards, and then place him in the lead when he has several established tricks and no means of escape. But this method can only be successfully employed in a small percentage of hands—*e.g.*, when dummy holds a very long suit of which the adversaries hold the deuce, and when the declarer can be kept out of the lead.

The declarer has a knowledge of his resources—the adversaries have not. He is in a better position than the adversaries to know when to win a trick, either in his own hand or the dummy, and so frustrate the adversaries' plans.

If there is danger of dummy being left with winners he can usually create a re-entry in his own hand and win the trick at the right moment. In the majority of cases he only needs an exit card in either hand to avert a fiasco.

The success of this method of playing against the declarer is dependent on a concatenation of circumstances in favour of the adversaries, and is rarely successful against an alert player.

TEST HAND, No. 3.

Here are two further examples from actual play.

Royals ...	Queen	9	6	2
Hearts ...	Ace Knave	4	3	
Diamonds	King	3		
Clubs ...	Knave	7	3	

Royals ...	Ace Kg. Kn.	8 7			Royals ...	10	5
Hearts ...	Kg.	5			Hearts ...	Qn.	
Diamonds	Ace Kn.	10 8			Diamonds	Qn.	7 5 4 2
Clubs ...	Ace	9			Clubs ...	Qn.	10 6 5 4

Royals ...	4	3				
Hearts ...	10	9	8	7	6	2
Diamonds	9	6				
Clubs ...	King	8	2			

THE BIDDING.

A "One Nullo"

Y "One Royal"

B "Two Nullos"

Z "No"

A "No"

Y "Two Royals"

B "No"

Z "No"

A "Three Nullos"

Y "Three Royals"

B "No"

Z "No"

A "Four Nullos"

Closed.

A and B must make at least their contract and the game. A must be careful with the diamond

suit, he must play the king from dummy in the first round of the suit and return the 3.

TEST HAND, No. 4.

An important principle of play is that when a trick is inevitable it should be taken as early in the play of the hand as possible, and while the hand still contains exit cards. Nullo fiascos are usually due to a breach of this rule of play.

Royals ...	Queen	Knave	10	9	4	2
Hearts ...	Knave	6	3			
Diamonds	7	2				
Clubs ...	7	4				

Royals ...								Royals ..	Ace	Kg.	6	
Hearts ...	Ace	Kg.	10					Hearts ...	9	8	7	4
Diamonds	Ace	10	9	6	4			Diamonds	Kg.	Kn.	8	3
Clubs ...	Ace	Kg.	On.	Kn.	3			Clubs ...	8	6		

Royals ...	8	7	5	3
Hearts ...	Queen	5	2	
Diamonds	Queen	5		
Clubs ...	10	9	5	2

THE BIDDING.

A	"One Nullo."
Y	"One No-Trump."
B	"Two Nullos."
Z	"Two No-Trumps."
A	"Three Nullos."
Y	"Three No-Trumps."
B	"Four Nullos."

Closed.

The declarer cannot be prevented from making his contract and the game. In the actual bidding Y

went to "four no-trumps" and was overcalled with "five nullo," the declarer fulfilling his contract.

COMBINING THE HANDS IN THE BIDDING.

The beginner is advised to play all of these hands completely through, as they embody several principles of play that frequently arise in the management of nullo hands. But he is first advised to thoroughly understand the theory of the declarations.

Combining the two hands in the bidding against a no-trump has now been raised to a fine art.

When the partner of the declarer raises the nullo bid he announces small cards in all the four suits, and if the declarer also has four suits protected with low cards he is practically assured of three-fourths of the small cards in the pack being in his favour. When, therefore, the bid has been raised once, the fives and sixes become nearly as valuable as the lower cards were in the first round of the bidding.

In the early bidding only low cards can be counted as raisers, but, as the bidding proceeds, the sixes, and even the sevens, have an increased value, and may be considered as losers, in much the same way as the queens and knaves may be reckoned as winners in no-trumps when the aces and kings of the same suits are held. It is all a question of the hands dovetailing, and just as one looks for high sequences in playing no-trumps one should look for sequences of low cards in playing nullo

THE LAWS OF ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

*(By kind permission of Messrs. Thomas De La Rue
and Company, London, E.C.)*

FRAMED by the Card Committee of the Portland Club, with the co-operation of a representative of each of the following Clubs:

The Baldwin, The Bath, The St. James', The Turf, and White's.

Finally approved and adopted by the Committee of the Portland Club (May, 1914).

THE RUBBER.

1. The rubber is the best of three games. If the first two games be won by the same players, the third game is not played.

SCORING.

2. A game consists of thirty points, obtained by tricks alone, which are scored below the line. This is exclusive of any points counted for Honours, Chicane, Slam, Bonus, or Under-tricks, all of which are scored above the line

3. Every hand is played out, and any points in excess of the thirty points necessary for the game are counted.

4. When the declarer (*vide* Law 50) makes good his declaration by winning at least as many tricks as he declared to win, each trick above 6 counts:—

- 6 points when Clubs are trumps,
- 7 „ „ Diamonds are trumps,
- 8 „ „ Hearts are trumps,
- 9 „ „ Spades (Royal) are trumps,
- 10 „ „ there are no Trumps.

These values become respectively 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 when the declaration has been doubled; and 24, 28, 32, 36, and 40 when the declaration has been redoubled (*vide* Law 56).

5. Honours consist of ace, king, queen, knave, and ten of the trump suit. When there are no trumps they consist of the four aces.

6. Honours in trump suits are thus reckoned:—

If a player and his partner conjointly hold—

- i. The five honours of the trump suit, they score for honours five times the value of the trump suit trick.
- ii. Any four honours of the trump suit, they score for honours four times the value of the trump suit trick.
- iii. Any three honours of the trump suit, they score for honours twice the value of the trump suit trick.

If a player in his own hand holds—

- i. The five honours of the trump suit, he and his partner score for honours ten times the value of the trump suit trick.
- ii. Any four honours of the trump suit, he and his partner score for honours eight

times the value of the trump suit trick ;
and if his partner holds the fifth honour,
nine times the value of the trump suit
trick.

The value of the trump suit referred to in this law
is its original value, *e.g.*, six points in clubs and
seven points in diamonds ; the value of honours is
in no way affected by any doubling or re-doubling

7. Honours, when there are no trumps, are thus
reckoned :—

If a player and his partner conjointly hold—

- i. The four aces, they score for honours
forty points.
- ii. Any three aces, they score for honours
thirty points.

If a player in his own hand holds—

The four aces, he and his partner score for
honours one hundred points.

These values are in no way affected by doubling or
re-doubling.

8. Chicane is thus reckoned :—

If a player holds no trump, he and his partner
score for Chicane twice the value of the
trump suit trick. The value of Chicane is
in no way affected by any doubling or
re-doubling.

9. Slam is thus reckoned :—

If a player and his partner make, indepen-
dently of any tricks taken for the revoke
penalty—

- i. All thirteen tricks, they score for Grand
Slam one hundred points.

ii. Twelve tricks, they score for Little Slam fifty points.

10. Honours, Chicane, Slam, Bonus, and points for Under-tricks are reckoned in the score at the end of the rubber.

11. At the end of the rubber, the total scores for Tricks, Honours, Chicane, Slam, Bonus, and Under-tricks obtained by each player and his partner are added up, two-hundred-and-fifty points are added to the score of the winners of the rubber, and the difference between the two scores is the number of points won, or lost, by the winners of the rubber.

12. If an erroneous score affecting Tricks, Bonus, or Under-tricks be proved, such mistake may be corrected prior to the conclusion of the game in which it occurred, and such game is not concluded until the last card of the following deal has been dealt, or, in the case of the last game of the rubber, until the score has been made up and agreed.

13. If an erroneous score affecting Honours, Chicane, and Slam be proved, such mistake may be corrected at any time before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed.

14. When a rubber is started with the agreement that the play shall terminate (*i.e.*, no new deal shall commence) at a specified time, and the rubber is then unfinished, the score is made up as it stands, one hundred and twenty-five points being added to the score of the winners of the game. A deal, if started, must be finished.

CUTTING.

15. The ace is the lowest card.

16. In all cases, every player must cut from the same pack.

17. Should a player expose more than one card, he must cut again.

FORMATION OF TABLE

18. If there are more than four candidates, the players are selected by cutting, the first six in the room having the right of belonging to the table, which is complete with six players. The candidates who cut the next lowest cards have a prior right to any after-comer to enter the table.

19. The four who cut the lowest cards play the first rubber ; they cut again for partners, and the two lowest play against the two highest. The player cutting the lowest card deals first, and has choice of cards and seats, and, having once made his selection, must abide by it.

20. Two players cutting cards of equal value, unless such cards are the two highest, cut again ; should they be the two lowest, a fresh cut is necessary to decide which of those two deals.

21. Three players cutting cards of equal value, cut again ; should the fourth (or remaining) card be the highest, the two lowest of the new cut are partners, the lower of those two the dealer ; should the fourth card be the lowest, the two highest are partners, the original lowest the dealer.

CUTTING OUT.

22. At the end of a rubber, should admission be claimed by one or two candidates, the player who has, or the players who have, played a greater number of consecutive rubbers than the others is, or are, out; but when all have played the same number, they must cut to decide upon the out-goers; the highest are out.

ENTRY AND RE-ENTRY.

23. A candidate, whether he has played or not, can join a table which is not complete by declaring in at any time prior to any of the players having cut a card, either for the purpose of commencing a fresh rubber or of cutting out.

24. In the formation of fresh tables, the candidates who have neither belonged to nor played at any other table have the prior right of entry; the others decide their right of admission by cutting.

25. Anyone quitting a table prior to the conclusion of a rubber may, with consent of the other three players, appoint a substitute in his absence during that rubber.

26. A player joining one table, whilst belonging to another, loses his right of re-entry into the latter, and takes his chance of cutting in as if he were a fresh candidate.

27. If any one break up a table, the remaining players have the prior right to him of entry into any other; and should there not be sufficient vacancies at such other table to admit all those candidates, they settle their precedence by cutting.

SHUFFLING.

28. The pack must neither be shuffled below the table nor so that the face of any card can be seen.

29. The pack must not be shuffled during the play of the hand.

30. A pack, having been played with, must neither be shuffled by dealing it into packets nor across the table.

31. Each player has a right to shuffle once only (except as provided by Law 34) prior to a deal, after a false cut, or when a new deal has occurred.

32. The dealer's partner must collect the cards for the ensuing deal, and has the first right to shuffle that pack.

33. Each player, after shuffling, must place the cards, properly collected and face downwards, to the left of the player about to deal.

34. The dealer has always the right to shuffle last ; but should a card or cards be seen during his shuffling, or whilst giving the pack to be cut, he may be compelled to re-shuffle.

THE DEAL

35. Each player deals in his turn ; the order of dealing goes to the left.

36. The player on the dealer's right cuts the pack, and, in dividing it, must not leave fewer than four cards in either packet ; if, in cutting or in replacing one of the two packets on the other, a card be exposed, or if there be any confusion of

the cards or a doubt as the exact place in which the pack was divided, there must be a fresh cut.

37. When a player, whose duty it is to cut, has once separated the pack, he cannot alter his cut ; moreover, he can neither re-shuffle nor re-cut the cards.

38. After the pack has been cut, should the dealer shuffle the cards, the pack must be cut again.

39. The fifty-two cards shall be dealt face downwards. The deal is not completed until the last card has been dealt face downwards. There is no misdeal.

A NEW DEAL.

40. There must be a new deal—

- i. If, during a deal, or during the play of a hand, the pack be proved to be incorrect or imperfect.
- ii. If, during a deal, any card be faced in the pack, or in any way exposed on, above, or below the table.
- iii. Unless the cards are dealt into four packets, one at a time and in regular rotation, beginning at the player to the dealer's left.
- iv. Should the last card not come in its regular order to the dealer.
- v. Should a player have more than thirteen cards, and any one or more of the others less than thirteen cards.

vi. Should the dealer deal two cards at once, or two cards to the same hand, and then deal a third; but if, prior to dealing that card, the dealer can, by altering the position of one card only, rectify such error, he may do so.

vii. Should the dealer omit to have the pack cut to him, and the adversaries discover the error prior to the last card being dealt, and before looking at their cards.

41. A player may not look at any of his cards until the deal has been completed; should he do so, and a card be afterwards exposed, the adversary on his left shall have the option of allowing the deal to stand or not.

42. If the dealer, before he has dealt fifty-one cards, look at any card, his adversaries have a right to see it, and may exact a new deal.

43. Should three players have their right number of cards, and the fourth have less than thirteen, and not discover such deficiency until he has played any of his cards, the deal stands good; should he have played, he is answerable for any revoke he may have made, as if the missing card, or cards, had been in his hand; he may search the other pack for it, or them.

44. If a pack, during or after a rubber, be proved incorrect or imperfect, such proof does not alter any past score, game, or rubber; that hand in which the imperfection was detected is null and void, and the dealer must deal again.

45. Any one dealing out of turn, or with the adversaries' cards, may be stopped before the last card is dealt, otherwise the deal stands good, and the game must proceed as if no mistake has been made.

46. A player can neither shuffle, cut, nor deal for his partner without the permission of his opponents.

DECLARING TRUMPS.

47. The dealer, having examined his hand, may either pass or may declare to win at least the odd trick, but he may declare to win more. Should he make a declaration, he must state whether the hand shall be played with or without trumps; in the former case, he must name which suit shall be trumps. The lowest declaration he can make is "One Club"—*i.e.*, he declares to win at least one odd trick, clubs being trumps.

48. After the dealer, each player in turn, commencing with the player on the dealer's left, has the right to pass or to make a declaration higher than has yet been made, or to double the last declaration, or to re-double a declaration which has been doubled, subject to the provisions of Law 56. A declaration of a greater number of tricks in a suit of lower value, which equals the last declaration in value of points, shall be considered a higher consideration, *e.g.*, a declaration of "Three Clubs" is a higher declaration than "Two Spades" (Royal), and "Four Clubs" is higher than "Three Hearts." If all the players pass, the hand is abandoned, and the deal passes to the next player.

49. A player, in his turn, may overbid previous declarations any number of times, and may also overbid his partner, but he cannot overbid his own declaration which has been passed by the other three players. When the final declaration has been made, *i.e.*, when the last declaration has been passed by the other three players—the player who made such declaration (or in the case where both partners have made declarations in the same suit, or of “No-Trumps,” the player who made the first of such declarations) shall play the combined hands of himself and of his partner, the latter becoming Dummy.

50. When the player of the two hands (hereinafter termed “the declarer”) wins at least as many tricks as he declared to do, he scores the full value of the tricks won (*see* Laws 2 and 4). When he fails, his adversaries score fifty points for each under-trick, *i.e.*, each trick short of the number declared; or, if the declaration has been doubled or re-doubled, one hundred or two hundred respectively for each under-trick; neither the declarer nor his adversaries score anything towards the game.

51. If a player makes an illegal declaration, such as declaring an impossible number of tricks, the adversary on his left may demand a new deal, may treat such declaration as not made, or may permit it to stand. The player in error cannot be penalised for more than Grand Slam.

52. If a player make a declaration (other than passing) out of turn, the adversary on his left may

demand a new deal, or may allow the declaration so made to stand, or he may refer it to his partner, whose decision must be final. Should the declaration be allowed to stand, the bidding shall continue as if the declaration had been in order.

53. If a player, in bidding, fail to declare a sufficient number of tricks to overbid the previous declaration, he shall be considered to have declared the requisite number of tricks in the bid which he has made, provided that the number of tricks shall not exceed seven; and his partner shall be debarred from making any further declaration, unless either of his adversaries make a higher declaration or double. If, however, such insufficient declaration be accepted by the next player passing it, or doubling it, or by making a higher declaration, no rectification can be made.

54. After the final declaration has been made, a player is not entitled to give his partner any information as to a previous declaration, whether made by himself or by either adversary; but a player is entitled to inquire, at any time during the play of the hand, what was the final declaration.

DOUBLING AND RE-DOUBLING.

55. The effect of doubling and re-doubling is that the value of each trick over six is doubled or quadrupled, as provided in Law 4; but it does not alter the value of a declaration—*e.g.*, a declaration of "Two Clubs" is higher than "One Heart," although the heart declaration has been doubled.

56. Any declaration can be doubled and re-doubled once, but not more; a player cannot double his partner's declaration, or re-double his partner's double, but he may re-double a declaration of his partner's which has been doubled by his adversaries.

57. The act of doubling, or re-doubling, re-opens the bidding. When a declaration has been doubled, or re-doubled, any player, including the player whose declaration has been doubled, or whose double has been re-doubled, can in his proper turn make a further declaration of higher value.

58. When a player whose declaration has been doubled, makes good his declaration by winning at least the declared number of tricks, he scores a bonus which consists of 50 points for winning the number of tricks declared, and 50 points for each additional trick he may win. If he or his partner have re-doubled, the bonus for winning the number of tricks declared and for each additional trick is doubled.

59. If a player double out of turn, the adversary on his left may demand a new deal.

60. When the final declaration has been made (*see* Law 49), the play shall begin, and the player on the left of the declarer shall lead.

61. A declaration once made cannot be altered, except as provided by Law 53, but if a declaration is obviously a misnomer, and is amended practically in the same breath, it stands as corrected.

DUMMY.

62. As soon as a card is led by the eldest hand, *i.e.*, the player on the left of the declarer, the declarer's partner shall place his cards face upwards on the table, and the duty of playing the cards from that hand, which is called Dummy, and of claiming and enforcing any penalties arising during the hand, shall devolve upon the declarer; unassisted by his partner.

63. Before placing his cards upon the table, the declarer's partner has all the rights of a player, but after so doing shall take no part whatever in the play, except that he has the right:—

- (a) To ask the declarer whether he has any of a suit which he may have renounced;
- (b) To call the declarer's attention to the fact that too many or too few cards have been played to a trick.
- (c) To correct the claim of either adversary to a penalty to which the latter is entitled;
- (d) To call attention to the fact that a trick has been wrongly gathered by either side;
- (e) To participate in the discussion of any disputed question of fact, or of law;
- (f) To correct an erroneous score.

If he call attention to any other incident in the play of the hand, in respect of which any penalty might be exacted, the fact that he has done so shall deprive the declarer of the right of exacting such penalty against his adversaries.

64. If the declarer's partner, by touching a card, or otherwise, suggest the play of a card from

Dummy, either of the adversaries may, but without consulting with his partner, call upon the declarer to play or not to play the card suggested.

65. If the declarer's partner call the attention of the declarer to the fact that he is about to lead from the wrong hand, the adversary on the left of the declarer may require that the lead be made from that hand.

66. When the declarer draws a card, either from his own hand or from Dummy, such card is not considered as played until actually quitted.

67. A card once played, or named by the declarer as to be played from his own hand or from Dummy, cannot be taken back, except to save a revoke.

68. The declarer's partner may not look over his adversaries' hands, nor leave his seat for the purpose of watching his partner's play.

69. Dummy is not liable to pay penalty for a revoke, as his adversaries see his cards. Should he revoke, and the error not be discovered until the trick is turned and quitted, the trick stands good.

70. The declarer is not liable to any penalty for an error whence he can gain no advantage. Thus, he may expose some, or all of his cards, without incurring any penalty.

EXPOSED CARDS.

71. If all the cards have been dealt, and before the final declaration has been made, any player expose a card from his hand, the adversary on his

left may demand a new deal. If the deal be allowed to stand, the exposed card may be taken up and cannot be called.

72. If, after the final declaration has been made, and before a card is led, the partner of the player who has to lead to the first trick exposes a card from his hand, the declarer may, instead of calling the card, require the leader not to lead the suit of the exposed card.

CARDS LIABLE TO BE CALLED.

73. All cards exposed by the declarer's adversaries are liable to be called, and must be left face upwards on the table; but a card is not an exposed card when dropped on the floor, or elsewhere below the table.

74. The following are exposed cards :—

- i. Two or more cards played at once.
- ii. Any card dropped with its face upwards, or in any way exposed on or above the table, even though snatched up so quickly that no one can name it.

75. If either of the declarer's adversaries play to an imperfect trick the best card on the table, or lead one which is a winning card as against the declarer and his partner, and then lead again, without waiting for his partner to play, or play several such winning cards, one after the other, without waiting for his partner to play, the latter may be called on to win, if he can, the first or any other of those tricks, and the other cards thus improperly played are exposed cards.

76. Should the declarer indicate that all or any of the remaining tricks are his, he may be required to place his cards face upwards on the table; but they cannot be called. The declarer is not then allowed to call any cards which his adversaries may have exposed, nor to take any finesse unless he announces it when making his claim.

77. If either of the declarer's adversaries throws his cards on the table face upwards, such cards are exposed, and liable to be called by the declarer.

78. If all the players throw their cards on the table face upwards, the hands are abandoned, and the score must be left as claimed and admitted. The hands may be examined for the purpose of establishing a revoke, but for no other purpose.

79. A card detached from the rest of the hand of either of the declarer's adversaries, so as to be named, is liable to be called; but should the declarer name a wrong card, he is liable to have a suit called when first he or his partner have the lead.

80. If a player, who has rendered himself liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called, or to win or not to win a trick, fail to play as desired, though able to do so, or if when called on to lead one suit, lead another, having in his hand one or more cards of that suit demanded, he incurs the penalty of a revoke.

81. If either of the declarer's adversaries leads out of turn, the declarer may call a suit from him or his partner when it is next the turn of either of them to lead, or may call the card erroneously led.

82. If the declarer lead out of turn, either from his own hand or from Dummy, he incurs no penalty; but he may not rectify the error after the second hand has played, unless called upon by either adversary to do so.

83. If any player lead out of turn, and the other three have followed him, the trick is complete, and the error cannot be rectified; but if only the second, or the second and third, have played to the false lead, their cards, on discovery of the mistake, can be taken back; and there is no penalty against anyone, excepting the original offender, and then only when he is one of the declarer's adversaries.

84. In no case can a player be compelled to play a card which would oblige him to revoke.

85. The call of a card may be repeated until such card has been played.

86. If a player called on to lead a suit have none of it, the penalty is paid.

CARDS PLAYED IN ERROR, OR NOT PLAYED TO A TRICK.

87. Should the fourth hand play before the second, the latter (not being Dummy or his partner) may be called on to win, or not to win, the trick, or to discard from a suit specified by the declarer (subject to Law 84).

88. If anyone (not being Dummy) omit playing to a former trick, and such error be not discovered until he has played to the next, the adversaries

may claim a new deal; should they decide that the deal stands good, or should Dummy have omitted to play to a former trick, and such error be not discovered till he shall have played to the next, the surplus card at the end of the hand is considered to have been played to the imperfect trick, but does not constitute a revoke therein.

89. If anyone play two cards to the same trick, or mix a card with a trick to which it does not properly belong, and the mistake be not discovered until the hand is played out, he (not being Dummy) is answerable for all consequent revokes he may have made. If, during the play of the hand, the error be detected, the tricks may be counted face downwards, in order to ascertain whether there be among them a card too many: should this be the case they may be searched, and the card restored; the player (not being Dummy) is, however, liable for all revokes which he may have meanwhile made.

THE REVOKE

90. Is when a player (other than Dummy), holding one or more cards of the suit led, plays a card of a different suit.

91. The penalty for each revoke shall be :—

- (a) When the declarer revokes, his adversaries shall score 150 points in addition to any penalty which he may have incurred for not making good his declaration.
- (b) When either of the adversaries revoke, the declarer may score 150 points, or may take

three tricks from his opponents and add them to his own. Such tricks taken as a penalty may assist the declarer to make good his declaration, but they shall not entitle him to score any bonus in the case of the declaration having been doubled or re-doubled.

The penalty of 150 points is not affected by doubling or re-doubling.

In no circumstances can partners score anything except for honours or Chicane on a hand in which one of them has revoked.

92. A revoke is established, if the trick in which it occurs has been turned and quitted, *i.e.*, the hand removed from that trick after it has been turned face downwards on the table—or if either the revoking player or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, lead or play to the following trick.

93. A player may ask his partner whether he has not a card of the suit which he has renounced, should the question be asked before the trick is turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish the revoke, and the error may be corrected, unless the question be answered in the negative, or unless the revoking player or his partner have led or played to the following trick.

94. At the end of the hand, the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks.

95. If a player discover his mistake in time to save a revoke, any player or players who have played after him may withdraw their cards and substitute others, and their cards withdrawn are not

liable to be called. If the player in fault be one of the declarer's adversaries, the declarer may call the card thus played in error, or may require him to play his highest or lowest card to that trick in which he has renounced.

96. If the player in fault be the declarer, the eldest hand may require him to play the highest or lowest card of the suit in which he has renounced, provided both of the declarer's adversaries have played to the current trick ; but this penalty cannot be exacted from the declarer when he is fourth in hand, nor can it be enforced at all from Dummy.

97. After a revoke has been claimed, if the accused player or his partner mix the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries, the revoke is established.

98. A revoke cannot be claimed after the cards have been cut for the following deal.

99. If a revoke occur, be claimed, and proved, bets on the odd trick, or on the amount of the score, must be decided by the actual state of the score after the penalty is paid.

100. Should both sides subject themselves to the penalty for a revoke, neither side can score anything except for honours or Chicane ; should either or both sides revoke more than once, the side making the fewest revokes scores one hundred and fifty points for each extra revoke.

CALLING FOR NEW CARDS.

101. Any player (on paying for them) before, but not after, the pack be cut for the deal, may call

for fresh cards. He must call for two new packs, of which the dealer takes his choice.

GENERAL RULES.

102. Anyone during the play of a trick, or after the four cards are played, and before, but not after, they are touched for the purpose of gathering them together, may demand that the cards be placed before their respective players.

103. If either of the declarers' adversaries, prior to his partner playing, should call attention to the trick—either by saying that it is his, or by naming his card, or, without being required so to do, by drawing it towards him—the declarer may require that opponent's partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit then led, or to win or not to win the trick.

104. Should the partner of the player, solely entitled to exact a penalty, suggest or demand the enforcement of it, no penalty can be enforced, but he is entitled to call his partner's attention to the fact that an offence has been committed (subject to Law 63). Should any player claim a penalty to which he is not entitled, he loses his right to exact any penalty.

105. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred, the offender is bound to give reasonable time for the decision of his adversaries.

106. If a bystander make any remark which calls the attention of a player or players to an oversight affecting the score, he is liable to be called on, by

the players only, to pay the stakes and all bets on that game or rubber.

107. Bets on the result of a rubber are won by the winners on points. If a rubber is concluded under Law 14, bets made on that rubber are annulled.

108. A bystander, by agreement among the players, may decide any question.

109. A card or cards torn or marked must be either replaced by agreement, or new cards called at the expense of the table.

110. Once a trick is complete, turned, and quitted, it must not be looked at (except under Law 89) until the end of the hand.

THREE-HANDED ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

THE Laws are the same as those of Royal Auction Bridge, except as varied by the following :

I. The game is played by three players, all against all ; the table being complete with four players.

II. The player who cuts the lowest card has the first deal ; the player cutting the next lowest card sits on the dealer's left, and the remaining player on the dealer's right. The cards are dealt as at Royal Auction Bridge, but the cards dealt to Dummy are not taken up until after the final declaration has been made. If whilst dealing a card be exposed, there must be a new deal.

III. The dealer makes his declaration or passes, and the bidding continues as at Royal Auction Bridge.

IV. If, after the deal has been completed, and before a card is led, any player expose a card from his hand, he shall forfeit 100 points to each of the other players ; and the declarer—if he be not the offender—may call upon the eldest hand not to lead from the suit of the exposed card. If he does

not exercise this right, the card must be left on the table as an exposed card. If the card be exposed by the declarer, after the final declaration has been made, there is no penalty.

V. If a player double out of turn, he forfeits 100 points to each of his adversaries, and the player whose declaration has been so doubled shall have the right to say whether or not the double shall stand. The bidding is then resumed; but if the double has been disallowed, the said declaration cannot be doubled by the player on the right of the offender.

VI. The rubber consists of four games; but when two games have been won by the same player, the other, or others, are not played.

VII. When the declarer makes good his declaration, he scores as at Royal Auction Bridge, when he fails to do so, he loses to each of his adversaries.

VIII. The scoring is the same as at Royal Auction Bridge, except with regard to honours, which are scored by each player severally—*i.e.*, each player who has one honour in clubs scores six; each player having two honours in clubs scores twelve; a player holding three honours in clubs scores eighteen; a player holding four honours scores forty-eight; and a player holding five honours in clubs scores sixty; and similarly for the other suits. In a "No-Trump" declaration, aces count ten each; and if all four be held by one player, one hundred.

IX. One hundred points are scored by each player for every game he wins, and the winner of the rubber adds a further two hundred and fifty points to his score.

X. At the conclusion of the rubber, the total scores obtained by each player are added up separately, and each player wins from, or loses to, each other player the difference between his score and that of the said other player.

ETIQUETTE OF ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

THE following rules belong to the established etiquette of Royal Auction Bridge. They are not called laws, as it is difficult—in some cases impossible—to apply any penalty to their infraction, and the only remedy is to cease to play with players who habitually disregard them.

It is unfair to purposely make a declaration which is insufficient to overbid the previous one.

Any one, having the lead and one or more winning cards to play, should not draw a second card out of his hand until his partner has played to the first trick, such act being a distinct intimation that the former has played a winning card.

A player who has looked at his cards ought not to give any indication by word or gesture as to the nature of his hand, or call the attention of his partner to the score of the game.

A player who desires the cards to be placed, should do it for his own information only, and not in order to invite the attention of his partner.

No player should object to refer to a bystander, who professes himself uninterested in the game and able to decide, a disputed question of facts, as to who played any particular card, whether honours were claimed though not scored, or *vice versa*, etc.

It is unfair to revoke purposely; having made a revoke, a player is not justified in making a second in order to conceal the first.

ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS.

IN the illustrative hands that follow A-B are partners against Y-Z, thus :

B

A Dealer

A is always the dealer.

When the score is not mentioned it is assumed to be love all.

The arrow shows the direction of the lead.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND No. 1.

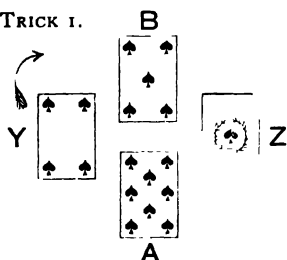
SCORE A - B, 12 ; Y--Z, 0.

Royals ...	9	7	6		
Hearts ...	Queen	Knave	7		
Diamonds	7	5			
Clubs ...	6	4	2		
Royals ...	4	3		B	Royals .. Ace Qn. Kn. 10 2
Hearts ...	Kg.	8	2		Hearts ... 10 9 5 3
Diamonds	Qn.	9	6	4	Diamonds Kg. 10 8
Clubs ...	Ace	9	8		Clubs ... 7
Royals ...	King	8			
Hearts ...	Ace	4			
Diamonds	Ace	Knave	3		
Clubs ...	King	Queen	Knave 10	5	3

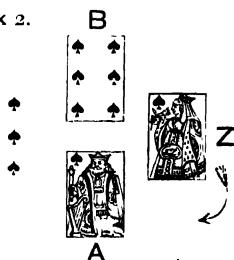
THE BIDDING.

A	"One Club"	
Y	"No"	
B	"No"	First Round.
Z	"One Royal"	
A	"Two Clubs"	
Y	"No"	
B	"No"	Second Round.
Z	"Two Royals"	
A	"Three Clubs"	} Third Round.
Closed		

TRICK 1.



TRICK 2.



A can now see seven tricks in his own hand. How should he play to make the extra trick required to fulfil his contract and to make the game? The possibilities of the hand lie entirely in the heart suit and in the trump suit. It is a position that frequently occurs, and the correct play is to ignore the hearts and to utilise one of dummy's little trumps before the opponents draw them.

THE BIDDING.

A	" Three Hearts "
Y	" No "
B	" No "
Z	" No "

COMMENTS ON THE BIDDING.

This hand illustrates the value of a pre-emptive bid in the rubber game. Many players in Y's position would be tempted to overcall the hand by declaring "four diamonds," but Y feels that the game is fairly safe in hearts. It is an axiom of Royal Auction that a player should not undertake a risky contract when an opportunity is afforded him of sitting tight and defeating an adverse contract.

If the pre-emptive bid had not been made Y-Z cannot be prevented from getting the contract and making a small slam in royals, as the king of hearts would be the opening lead from A. If the final trump were diamonds Y-Z make five by cards.

By capturing the contract A-B make ten tricks, game and rubber.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND NO. 3.

Royals ...	Ace	6	5			
Hearts ...	King	Queen	Knave	7	4	3
Diamonds	4					
Clubs ...	Ace	Queen	6			

Royals ...	9	3	2		B	Royals... Kn 10
Hearts ...	10	9	8	6	5	Hearts... 2
Diamonds	Ace	9	8	2		D'monds Kg Qn Kn 10 7 5 3
Clubs ...	10					Clubs ... Kg Kn 4

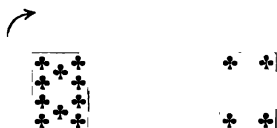
Royals ...	King	Queen	8	7	4	
Hearts ...	Ace					
Diamonds	6					
Clubs ...	9	8	7	5	3	2

THE BIDDING.

A	"One Royal"	
Y	"No"	
B	"No"	First Round.
Z	"Two Diamonds"	
A	"No"	
Y	"No"	
B	"Two Royals"	Second Round.
Z	"Three Diamonds"	
A	"No"	
Y	"No"	
B	"Three Royals"	Third Round.
Z	"No"	
A	"No"	
Y	"Four Diamonds"	
B	"Four Royals"	Fourth Round.
	Closed	

TRICK 1.

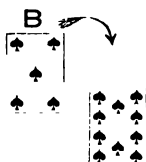
B



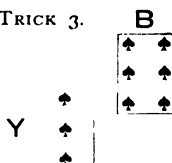
♣
—
A

A plays the ace of clubs from dummy, and then a small trump.

TRICK 2.



TRICK 3.



A must now be careful to unblock dummy's hearts before playing another round of trumps.

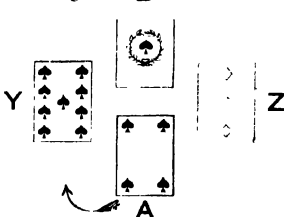
TRICK 4.

B



TRICK 5.

B



A plays three winning hands and makes his contract and game.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND NO. 4.

Royals	...	King	10	8
Hearts	...	King	Knave	9
Diamonds...		King	8	5
Clubs	...	8	6	3

Royals ..	6	4	2		Royals ..	Qn	Kn	9
Hearts ..	Ace	10	3	2		Hearts...	8	7
D'monds	3					D'monds	10	9
Clubs ...	Ace	Kg	Qn	9	4	Clubs .	Kn	10

	B	
Y		Z
	A	

Royals	...	Ace	5	3
Hearts	...	Queen	6	5
Diamonds...		Ace	Queen	Knave
Clubs	...		7	4

THE BIDDING.

- A "One No-Trump."
 Y "Two Hearts."
 B "Two No-Trumps"
 Closed.

COMMENTS ON THE BIDDING

Y employs the ruse known as "the shift," that is, without disclosing his strength by calling "two clubs," he tries to induce the third player (probably guarded in hearts) to call "two no-trumps." If B instead of overcalling double Y's bid, the latter has an easy "shift" to clubs, but as he swallows the bait Y downs the declarer.

B having a stopper in hearts besides a hand counting up to 18 raises his partner's bid to "two no-trumps."

Y having gained his end, would be very foolish to double with two weak suits to which the declarer

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

can branch. If Y doubles, A declares "three diamonds," and fulfils his contract quite easily.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND NO. 5.

Royals ...	9			
Hearts ...	10			
Diamonds	Queen	Knave	8	7
Clubs ...	10	8	7	6

Royals ... Kg	Kn	10	5	<div><div>B</div><div>Y<div>Z</div></div><div>A</div></div> <td>Royals ... Qn</td> <td>8</td> <td>7</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td>	Royals ... Qn	8	7	4	2	
Hearts .. Ace		5	4		3	2	Hearts ... Qn	8	7	6
Diamonds	3	2					Diamonds Kg	9	6	
Clubs ... Kn	9						Clubs ... 3			

Royals ...	Ace	6	3
Hearts ...	King	Knave	9
Diamonds	Ace	10	4
Clubs ...	Ace	King	Queen 4

THE BIDDING.

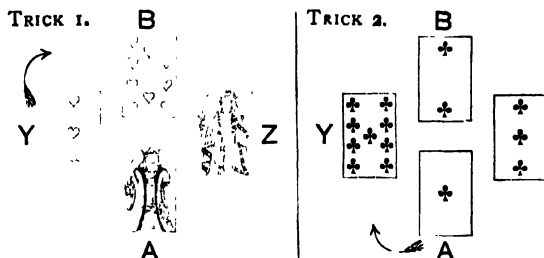
A	"One No-trump."
Y	"No."
B	"Two Clubs."
Z	"No."

A "Two No-Trumps."
Closed.

COMMENTS ON THE BIDDING.

B makes a perfectly sound "rescue" bid with six clubs to the ten, but A returns to no-trumps as he is fully guarded in all the suits, and he is practically certain of being able to utilise dummy's long suit of

clubs, having a low club as a re-entry for dummy in the fourth round.



A plays ace, king, queen of clubs and then dummy's three long clubs. He then leads the queen of diamonds to take the finesse. The only way Z can prevent a grand slam is by holding up king of diamonds to the third round.

The declarer makes a small slam.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND No. 6.

SCORE A-B 10; Y Z 0 IN THE RUBBER GAME.

Royals...	Queen	5	4		
Hearts ...	Ace	7	4	3	2
Diamonds	6				
Clubs ...	Queen Knave	7	4		
Royals...	Kg	9	8	6	3
Hearts...	Kg Qn				
D'monds	10	8			
Clubs ...	10	8	3		
Royals...	—				
Hearts...	Kn	10	9	6	
D'monds	Ace Kg Qn	4	3	2	
Clubs ...	Kg	9	6		
Royals ...	Ace	Knave	10		
Hearts ...	8	5			
Diamonds	Knave	9	7		
Clubs ...	Ace	5			

THE BIDDING.

A	"One Royal"	}	First Round.
Y	"No"		
B	"No"		
Z	"Two Diamonds"		

A	"No"	}	Second Round.
Y	"No"		
B	"Two Royals"		
Z	"Three Diamonds"		

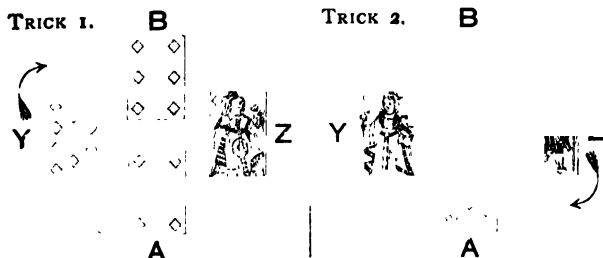
A	"No"	}	Third Round.
Y	"No"		
B	"Three Royals"		
Z	"No"		

A	"No"	}	Fourth Round.
Y	"Double"		

Closed.

COMMENTS ON THE BIDDING.

There was some tall bidding on this hand as the rubber game was being played. Y's double was a "free" double because the adversaries' completed contract would have given them game, his partner's "three diamonds" showed control of the suit, and there was little fear of A—B branching to "three no-trumps."



The declarer has no long suit to establish; his best course is to play for a cross ruff.



+

A

A now plays a diamond for dummy to ruff. On the third round of diamonds Y plays king of spades and draws one round of trumps, but the declarer cannot be prevented from making ten tricks.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND No. 7.

Royals ...	Queen	Knave	2
Hearts ...	Ace	7	
Diamonds	Knave	10	3
Clubs ...	King	Queen	8

Royals ...	5	3		B	Royals ...	Kg	10	9	7	6
Hearts ...	10	9	8	6	4	Hearts ...	Qn	5	3	
Diamonds	Kg	Qn	9	8	7	Diamonds	Ace			
Clubs ...	5					Clubs ...	Kn	9	7	3

Royals . .	Ace	8	4	
Hearts ...	King	Knave	2	
Diamonds	6	5	4	
Clubs ...	Ace	10	6	4

THE BIDDING

A "One No-Trump."

Y "No."

B "No."

Z "Two Royals."

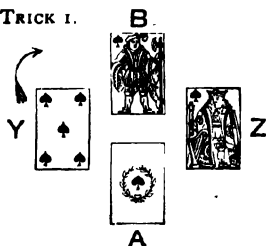
A "No."

Y "No."

B "Two No-Trumps."

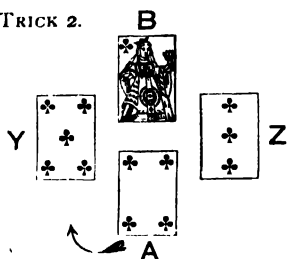
Closed.

TRICK I.

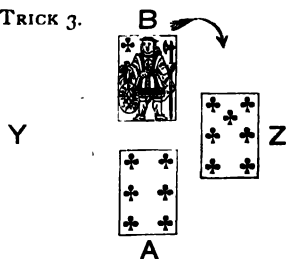


A rubber is often lost by not providing for the unequal distribution of a suit in the adversaries' hands. If the clubs are divided three in the one hand and two in the other the declarer must make four tricks in the suit, but there is the possibility of the knave being guarded in one of the opponents' hands. The declarer must arrange his finesse in advance for this contingency, always postponing his finesse as long as possible in order to obtain an indication of how the cards lie. When it is only possible to arrange the finesse in one of the two hands the player has to assume that the card he is finessing against lies in a position favourable to him.

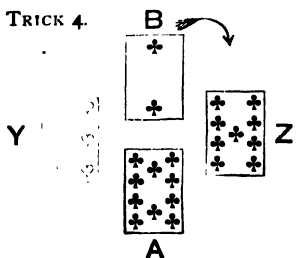
TRICK 2.



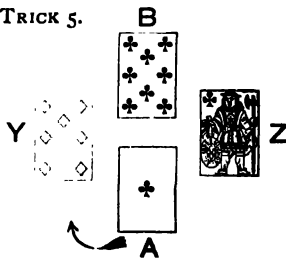
TRICK 3.



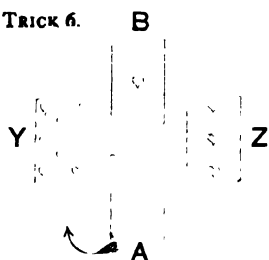
TRICK 4.



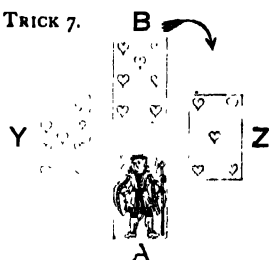
TRICK 5.



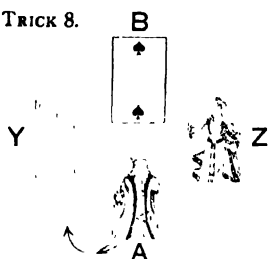
TRICK 6.



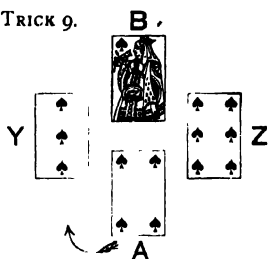
TRICK 7.



TRICK 8.



TRICK 9.



A player is always justified in risking the fulfilment of his contract when a successful finesse will give him game and rubber.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND No. 8.

Royals ... Ace Kn
 Hearts ... Queen
 Diamonds Knave
 Clubs ... Queen

Royals ... Kn 3
 Hearts ... Ace 10 7 6 5
 Diamonds Kg
 Clubs ... Kg Kn 9 7 6

B

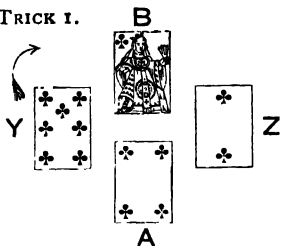
Royals ... 10 9 8 7 6
 Hearts ... Kg 3
 Diamonds 9 8 7 4
 Clubs , 8 2

Royals ... Queen 5 4 2
 Hearts ... Knave 4
 Diamonds Ace Queen 10
 Clubs ... Ace 10 5

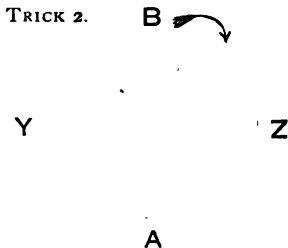
THE BIDDING.

A "One No-Trump."
 Y "Two Hearts."
 B "Two No-Trumps."
 Closed.

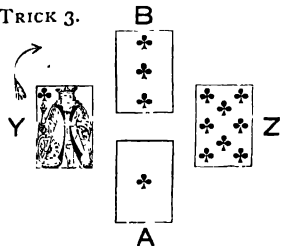
TRICK 1.



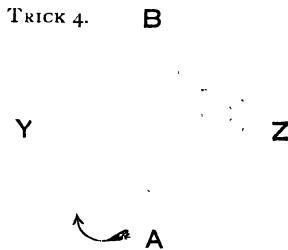
TRICK 2.



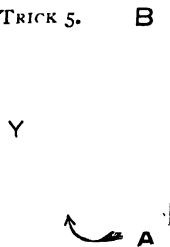
TRICK 3.



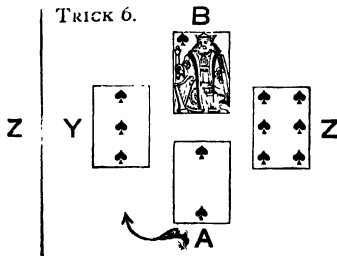
TRICK 4.



TRICK 5.



TRICK 6.



TRICK 7.

B



Y

Z

A

TRICK 8.

B



Y

Z

A

TRICK 9.

B



Y

Z

A

TRICK 10.

B



Y

Z

A

TRICK 11.

B

Y

Z

A

TRICK 12.

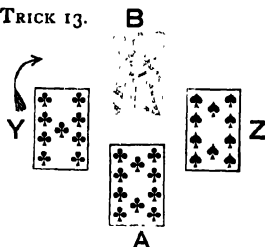
B

Y

Z

A

TRICK 13.



A—B make the game.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND No. 9.

Royals	...	Queen	Knave	9	3	2
Hearts	...	King	Knave	3		
Diamonds	...	Ace	Queen	9		
Clubs	...	10	2			

Royals...	8	7				
Hearts...	Qn	9	6			
D'monds	Kg	Kn	10	8	6	3
Clubs ...	Kn	6				

	B	
Y		Z
	A	

Royals	...	Ace	6	5	
Hearts	...	8	7	5	4
Diamonds...		7	4		
Clubs	...	Qn	9	7	5

Royals	...	King	10	4		
Hearts	...	Ace	10	2		
Diamonds	...	5	2			
Clubs	...	Ace	King	8	4	3

THE BIDDING.

A	"One No-Trump."
Y	"Two Diamonds."
B	"Double."
Z	"No."

A	"No."
Y	"No."

COMMENTS ON THE BIDDING.

An opportunity for doubling instead of bidding arises when the second player has called two in a suit over the dealer's no-trump, and it is clear to the third player that it is a weak call merely intended to push the dealer. It is a form of pushing that is apt to be heavily penalised, because a contract to make eight tricks against a sound no-trump is always difficult to fulfil. The third player's double gives the dealer an opportunity to increase his bid or to play to defeat the contract.

The general rule is that a bid of "two" in a minor suit should not be doubled unless the doubler is assured of success, and is at the same time prepared to double any suit to which the declarer may branch.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND NO. 10.

Royals ...	10	8	2		
Hearts ...	King	Queen	Knave	9	
Diamonds	3				
Clubs ...	Ace	Knave	9	7	3

Royals ...	7							Royals...	Kg	6	5	4
Hearts ...	8	7	6	5				Hearts .	Ace	10		
Diamonds	Ace	Kn.	7	2				D'monds	Kg	Qn	10	9
Clubs ...	Kg.	10	6	2				Clubs ...			8	5

		B	
Y			Z
		A	

Royals ...	Ace	Queen	Knave	9	3
Hearts ...	4	3	2		
Diamonds	6				
Clubs ...	Queen	8	5	4	

THE BIDDING.

A	"One Royal"	}	First Round.
Y	"No"		
B	"No"		
Z	"Two Diamonds"		

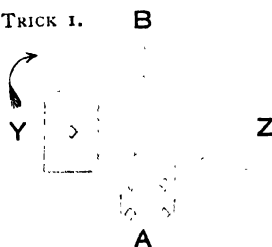
A	"No"	}	Second Round.
Y	"No"		
B	"Two Royals"		
Z	"No"		

A	"No"	{	Third Round.
Y	"Three Diamonds"		
B	"Three Royals"		
Z	"Four Diamonds"		

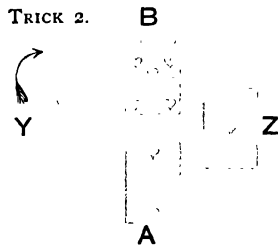
A	"No"		Fourth Round.
Y	"No"		
B	"Four Royals"		
Z	"Double"		

Closed

TRICK 1.



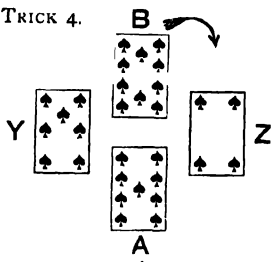
TRICK 2.



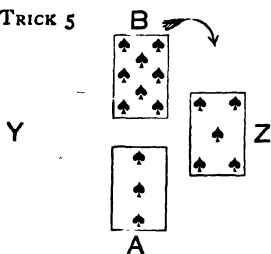
TRICK 3. B



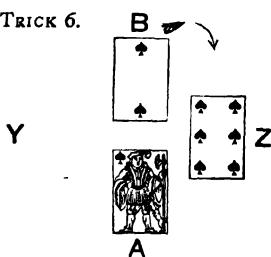
TRICK 4.



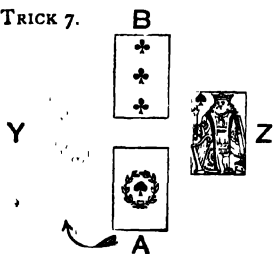
TRICK 5



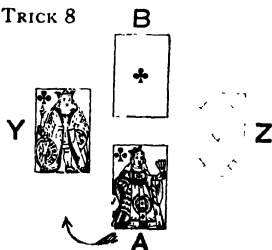
TRICK 6.



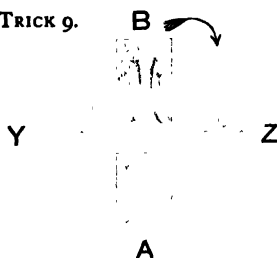
TRICK 7.



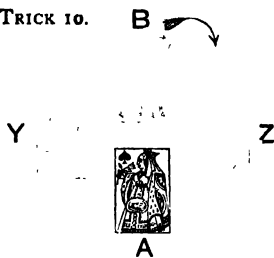
TRICK 8



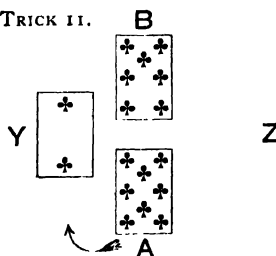
TRICK 9.



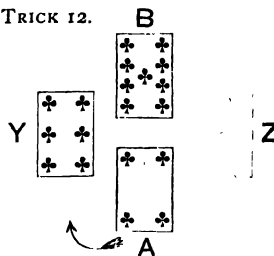
TRICK 10.



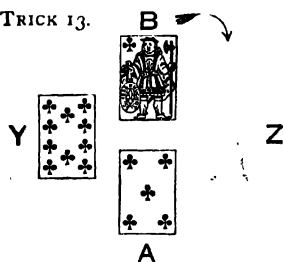
TRICK 11.



TRICK 12.



TRICK 13.



A—B make eleven tricks.

ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND No. 11.

Royals	... Ace	10
Hearts	... King	9
Diamonds	... 2	
Clubs	... King	8

Royals	Qn	9	2
Hearts	Kn	7	
D'monds	Kn	10	9
Clubs	Qn	9	

	B	
Y		Z
	A	

Royals	Kn	6
Hearts	Qn	10
Diamonds	Kg	Qn
Clubs	Kn	10

Royals	King	8	7
Hearts	Ace	8	4
Diamonds	Ace	8	7
Clubs	Ace	5	2

3

THE CODING

A	"One No-Trump."
Y	"No."
B	"No."
Z	"No."

TRICK 1. B

Y

Z

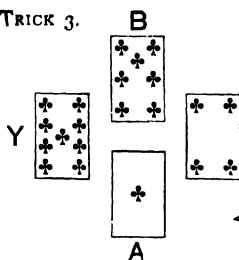
A

This is an every-day situation that is frequently badly handled. The declarer can make seven tricks, but he needs nine for game, and the two extra tricks can only be made in spades if he retains the command of the diamonds till Z is exhausted.

TRICK 2. B



TRICK 3.



A now establishes dummy's spades while he has still command of all the suits. A—B make ten tricks.

ILLUSTRATIVE HAND NO. 12.

Royals	...	9	8	6	5			
Hearts	...	10	7					
Diamonds	..	Queen	10	8	7	6	5	4
Clubs	.	—						

Royals ...	Ace	Kn.	3					Royals .	10	2
Hearts ...	Kg.	9	8	6				Hearts .	Kn	3 2
Diamonds	Kn.	2						Diamondc	9	3
Clubs ...	Qn.	5	3	2				Clubs	Kg	Kn 10 9 7 6

Royals	...	King	Queen	7	4
Hearts	...	Ace	Queen	5	4
Diamonds	..	Ace	King		
Clubs	...	Ace	8	4	

THE BIDDING.

A "One No-Trump."
 Y "No."
 B "Two Diamonds."
 Z "No."

A "Two No-Trumps."
 Closed.

TRICK 1.

B



Y



Z

A

The possibilities of the hand lie entirely in the diamond suit: after playing ace and king of diamonds A must play to create a re-entry in the spade suit in dummy's hand. It does not matter whether or not Y holds up the ace of spades at trick 4.

TRICK 2.

B

Y

Z



A

TRICK 3.

B

Y

Z



A

TRICK 4.

B

Y

Z



A

TRICK 5.

B

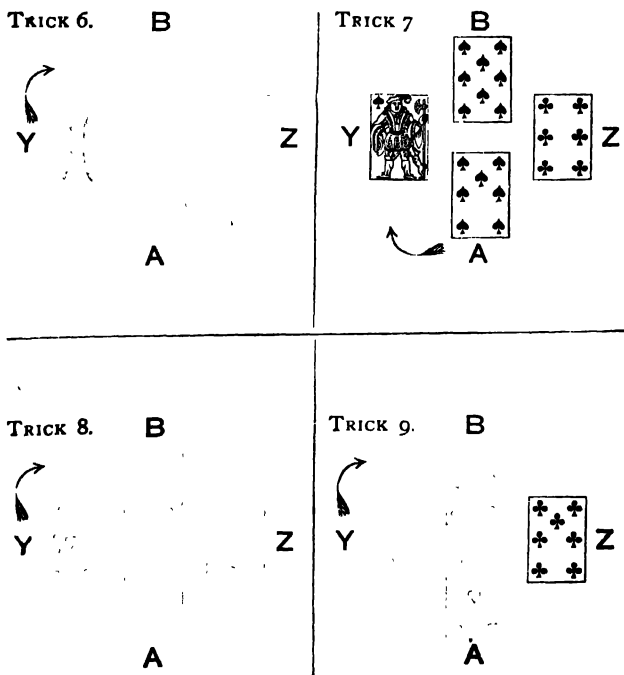
Y

Z



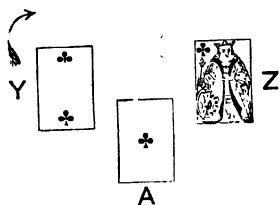
A

Y now plays for the establishment of his hearts, having a sure re-entry in spades; if he plays a club instead the declarer can only make six tricks in all—this is where the advantage of playing the two hands comes in, the declarer has a complete knowledge of his resources, the adversaries have not.



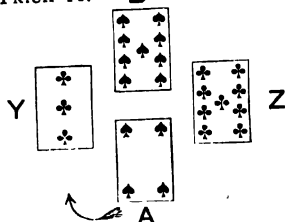
TRICK 10.

B



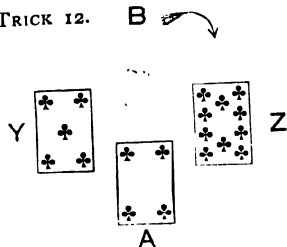
TRICK 11.

B



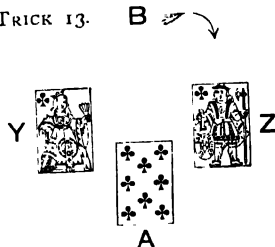
TRICK 12.

B



TRICK 13.

B



A—B make nine tricks and game.

THE OF Field

**THE FARM, THE GARDEN,
The Country Gentleman's Newspaper.**

Devoted entirely to the interests of Country Gentlemen, and for over Fifty Years the Leading Authority on Sport and Pastimes, the "Field" is one of the Largest and most Influential Papers in Great Britain. The subjects are treated in the fullest manner by the foremost writers of the day, and where thought advisable are Illustrated in the best manner possible.

**Published every Saturday, Price 6d.;
by post 6½d.**

*Subscription in the United Kingdom Yearly, £1 9s. 6d.;
Six Months, 11s. 9d.; Three Months, 7s. 6d.*

Offices :
Windsor House, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C.

Fourth Edition. *Crown 8vo, limp cloth. Price 3s. 6d. net.*

The Principles of Chess IN Theory and Practice.

By JAMES MASON.

CONTENTS.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| I.—Elements of Chess. | II.—General Principles. |
| III.—Combination. | IV.—Exposition of Master Play Complete. |

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

Fourth Edition. *Price 6s. net.*

THE ART OF CHESS.

By JAMES MASON.

CONTENTS.

- I.—The End Game. II.—The Middle Game. III.—The Opening.

Second Edition *Price 2s. net.*

CHESS OPENINGS.

By JAMES MASON.

Price 2s. 6d. net.

SOCIAL CHESS.

A COLLECTION of SHORT and BRILLIANT GAMES, with
HISTORICAL and PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

By JAMES MASON.

The Field & Queen (Horace Cox) Ltd., Bream's Buildings, London.

Demy 8vo, Cloth Boards. Price 5s. net.

Nyasaland for the Hunter and Settler.

With Map and 23 Illustrations.

By DENIS D. LYELL, F.Z.S.,

Author of "Hunting Trips in Northern Rhodesia," and Joint Author, with Capt. C. H. Stigand, of "Central African Game and its Spoor."

Demy 4to, Beautifully Illustrated. Price 21s. net.

Hunting Trips in Northern Rhodesia.

By DENIS D. LYELL, F.Z.S.

Second Edition.

Price 21s. net.

Demy 4to, Profusely and Beautifully Illustrated.

The Game of British East Africa.

By CAPT. C. H. STIGAND, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S.

Joint Author of "Central African Game and its Spoor."

Super Royal 8vo, Cloth Boards (Bevelled).

Price One Guinea net.

Big Game Shooting in India, Burma and Somaliland.

(Illustrated.)

By COL. V. M. STOCKLEY

(Late 16th Cavalry, Indian Army).

The Field & Queen (Horace Cox) Ltd., Bream's Buildings, London.

*Price £2 2s. net***THE GREAT SIRE LINES****TABLES SHOWING THEIR
SUCCESES and FAILURES.****Edited and Compiled by W. H. E. WANKLYN,**
*Author of "The Australasian Racehorses"**Demy 8vo**Price 15s net.***Register of Thoroughbred
Stallions, 1913.****(VOL. II)****Compiled by F. M. P.***In Two Vols Vol I., Text, Vol II., Plates Price 30s net.***DIXON KEMP'S MANUAL OF
Yacht and Boat Sailing and
Yacht Architecture.****Edited by BROOKE HECKSTALL-SMITH, A.I.N.A. (Secretary
Yach. Racing Association, &c), and LINTON-HOPE, M.I.N.A***Foolscap 8vo Cloth, rounded corners With Plates and Diagrams
Price 5s net***THE ART OF SKATING****(INTERNATIONAL STYLE).****By E. and M. SYERS.****MODERN DOGS
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.****By RAWDON B LEE, F.Z.S****THE SPORTING DIVISION** *In Two Volumes Demy 8vo
4th Edition. Price 10s net.***THE NON-SPORTING.** *3rd Edition Price 5s net.***THE TERRIERS.** *4th Edition. Price 5s net.***The Field & Queen (Horace Cox) Ltd, Bream's Buildings, London**

